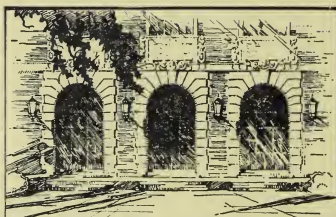


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PERSECUTIONS OF POPERY:

HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

OF

THE MOST REMARKABLE PERSECUTIONS

OCCASIONED BY THE INTOLERANCE

OF THE

CHURCH OF ROME.

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CHURCH OF ROME.

BY

FREDERIC SHOBERL.

“Popery and Slavery, like two sisters, go hand in hand. Sometimes the one goes first, and sometimes the other; but, wherever the one enters, the other is sure to be closely following.”

FIRST EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TO
HIS PROTESTANT FELLOW-SUBJECTS
OF EVERY DENOMINATION,
THESE VOLUMES,
ILLUSTRATIVE OF
THE SPIRIT OF POPERY IN ALL AGES,
DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME,
ARE MOST AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

12 May 1892
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P R E F A C E.

At a time when Popery appears to be mustering all its energies for the renovation of its tarnished glories and its diminished power; when Jesuits' Colleges and monastic institutions are springing up even in these our islands, and prodigious efforts are making to gain proselytes among the uneducated classes; when we see British senators not only stepping forth as champions of Catholicism, but even abjuring the faith in which they have been brought up, and betaking themselves into the bosom of the only saving Romish Church—it will scarcely be thought unseasonable to rouse the attention of the Protestant population of these realms to the means by which that Church acquired her extraordinary power, to the spirit with which she has wielded it for above a

thousand years, with which she is animated to this very day, and which, unless an effectual barrier be opposed, threatens at no distant period to produce most calamitous results. Such is the object of these Volumes.

Resorting in preference to Catholic writers for the materials for this Work, I have shown that the Papal authority, acquired by forgery, fraud, and usurpation, was upheld by treachery, rapacity, and the direst cruelties ever inflicted on mankind. If, indeed, the fable of Pandora's box has ever been realised in this world, it was at the Vatican, that inexhaustible source of immoralities, vices, enormities, abominations, which, like a pestilence, infected for ages all the countries of Christendom. From so polluted a fount no clearer stream could be expected to issue. The Papal throne was filled by a line of pontiffs, who, in spite of the assumed sanctity of their character, were many of them stained by crimes so execrable as scarcely to be paralleled in the annals of temporal princes, and whose very amusements render it doubtful whether they deserved the name of men. Witness Borgia, who assumed the appellation of Alexander VI., and of the Sunday orgies of

whose court, a churchman, an official, and eye-witness of the scenes which he describes,* presents a picture that excites inexpressible abhorrence and disgust. What wonder that his children by a publicly acknowledged mistress should prove such monsters of iniquity, and that the infamy of his daughter Lucretia should give to that name, as applied to her, an air of the keenest irony !

Neither is it surprising that, under the rule of such heads of the Church, Popery should gradually degenerate into a tissue of fables, legends, and mummeries too extravagant and too absurd to be adopted by any but the mailed warriors and the peasant slaves of the darkest ages. As Southey justly remarks, the priests and monks themselves must often have been utterly astonished at the success of the gross deceptions which they were continually practising on the public credulity.

It was not so much with a view to expose the inconceivable depravity of the Popes and the shameless delusions which they devised and countenanced, as

* *Burchardi Archentinensis, Capellæ Alexandri Sexti Papæ, Clerici, Cereemoniarum Magistri, Diarium*, printed in *Eccardi Corpus historic. Medii Ævi*.

the inhuman intolerance towards those whom they are pleased to term heretics, which has uniformly characterised their conduct ever since their attainment of temporal power, that this Work has been undertaken. Accordingly, though much is introduced in illustration of the general spirit and principles of the Romish See, these Volumes are chiefly occupied by records of the most prominent of those cruel persecutions, commanded or instigated by it against Christians whose consciences forbade the adoption of its monstrous doctrines. Most of these narratives will, I flatter myself, be found more copious, more complete, and more satisfactory than any accounts of the same events hitherto published in our language : and the last section will, I hope, suffice to convince every reader that the system which prompted the atrocities detailed in these pages, though now restricted in its operation, remains unchanged to this day, that the heads of the Romish Church still regard tolerance as a deadly sin, and that they are filled with the same holy hostility as ever against the professors of other creeds. Let statesmen, let legislators, prate as they please of the present harmlessness of Popish principles, of the mildness of mitigated

Catholic doctrines—stubborn facts give them the lie, and proclaim the unchanged and unchangeable spirit of persecution, which still rankles in the bosom of Popery.

An extraordinary manifestation of this spirit is to be found in the history of our own country, inasmuch as it occurred under a sovereign making an outward profession at least of Protestant principles. It was Popish influence which, under Charles II., produced the persecution of Nonconformists, and which, seconded by the High-church notions and short-sightedness of Clarendon, weakened the Protestant interest at a period when it was threatened with dangers not the less real, because they were concealed. Charles, the son of a Catholic mother, though early in life a Catholic himself, had the policy—call it hypocrisy, if you please—to mask his religious predilections under an external conformity with the ordinances of the English Church; while his brother James professed and resolutely adhered to Popery, at the risk of exclusion from the succession. The King's ministers also were either Papists or debauchees, utterly regardless of every kind of religion.

Well knowing that no means are so effective for

weakening an opposing party as division, they procured the enactment of all those rigorous statutes against Dissenters which disgraced the Long Parliament, in hopes of driving them into a coalition with the Catholics; but the horror with which the former shrank from the unnatural union, and the resignation with which they submitted to every hardship, frustrated these manœuvres.

Foiled in the attempt to compass his point by artifice, Charles entered into that guilty league with France for introducing Popery into his dominions by force, for which a like fate to that of his father would have been a very inadequate atonement.

The Earl of Shaftesbury seems to have been among the statesmen of his time the most deeply impressed with the inestimable value of Protestant institutions, as inseparably connected with the liberties of Englishmen. He declared emphatically that "Popery and Slavery, like two sisters, go hand in hand. Sometimes the one goes first, and sometimes the other; but, wherever the one enters, the other is sure to be closely following." He had the sagacity to penetrate the designs of the Court, and, during the latter years of his life, toleration and the Protestant

cause had not a more zealous, unwearied, or undaunted champion, whatever might have been his private sentiments in regard to religion. By the congenial spirit which he awakened in Parliament and in the nation generally, the indolent Charles was deterred from the dangerous experiment for eradicating Protestantism, and left the attempt to his more bigoted and obstinate brother.

How James forfeited the throne by a daring violation of the oath sworn at his coronation—sworn, it is true, to heretics, and, therefore, not deemed binding by Papists—and how a dogged perseverance in designs for overthrowing the established religion of his people and erecting Popery on its ruins led to the expulsion of himself and all his race—these are facts well known to the most superficial reader.

These are facts, nevertheless, of which the patriarch of the philosophy of the eighteenth century was either absolutely ignorant, or to which he wilfully shut his eyes, when he was not able to discover a more rational cause for the misfortunes of James II. and the Stuart family in general than fatality. “If,” says he, “there is any thing to justify those who believe in a fatality which

there is no escaping, it is the continuous series of misfortunes which persecuted the House of Stuart for upwards of three hundred years." In this sage conclusion Voltaire is obsequiously followed by recent writers.

It requires, however, no extraordinary penetration to perceive that the ruin of Mary Stuart was bigoted attachment to the Catholic religion. It was this, conjointly with the effects of her education in the depraved Court of Catherine de Medicis, that lost her the crown of Scotland; it was this that involved her in perpetual machinations for the subversion of the throne, if not for the actual murder of her "good sister" Elizabeth; and it was this that finally entangled her in the conspiracy which brought her to the block.

If the Catholic religion proved the ruin of Mary, it was not less the rock on which her descendants were doomed to split. Thus it was no fatality that produced those disasters, which hurled the later Stuarts from their high position, but an obstinate determination to achieve an impossibility, generated by the arbitrary nature and proselytizing spirit of the religion to which they were devoted. Popery

is essentially a religion of tyranny and slavery. The people must be slaves to the sovereign, the sovereign a slave to the Church. It tolerates no intermediate class. Never did the English Parliament enact a wiser and more beneficent law than that by which professors of the Popish faith are for ever excluded from the throne of these Protestant realms.

Though, at this day, Great Britain may be deemed tolerably secure against either the open assaults or the covert artifices of Romanism, there is a most important portion of the Empire where the consequences threatened by both cannot be contemplated without painful apprehension. The curse of Popery rests upon unhappy Ireland, the prey of priests and of political conspirators, whose seditious incitements have urged her inflammable population to the verge of rebellion. This is the real grievance under which that devoted country is suffering. Popery presses like an incubus upon it, paralyses industry, drains its resources, depraves the national character, stifles every feeling of independence, and degrades its votaries into blind slaves of its arbitrary will.

A morbid liberalism, which seems to be gaining ground, and which would fain pass for philosophy,

may perhaps be disposed to cavil at some of the sentiments expressed in this Work ; but, if I have occasionally hazarded warm remarks, or drawn severe conclusions, I can only plead that they have been irresistibly forced upon me by the facts and circumstances which the nature of the subject brought under my consideration.

LONDON,

July, 1844.

PERSECUTIONS OF POPERY.

I. RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE PAPAL POWER, SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL.

The doctrines bequeathed by the Founder of Christianity to his disciples constituted the most sublime, the most beneficent, the purest religion that was ever given to mankind. It was no temporal power, no political sovereignty, that he came to establish. He emphatically declared that his kingdom is not of this world, and warned his apostles not to confound the mission which he gave them with the power exercised by the princes of the earth. They were sent not to govern but to teach; the authority which they received consisted in diffusing knowledge and doing good. Confining their efforts to these labours of universal love, they never thought of setting themselves up as rivals of the civil power: on the contrary, obedience to sovereigns was one of the first precepts of their religious morality.

The successors of the apostles long held the same language. They acknowledged no power superior to that of the sovereign but God himself: while the Church exercised no authority but by its virtues, and possessed no other riches, no other domain, but the faith. Such are the expressions of those who are emphatically called its Fathers, not only during the first three centuries, but after the time of Constantine, and even of Charlemagne.

The christian congregations, formed so early as the time of the apostles in the principal cities of the Roman empire, were governed by bishops whose functions differed as widely from those of the prelates of later periods as the idea originally attached to the designation *Επισκοπος*, literally, overseer, differs from that now connected with the episcopal title. In the capital of the empire, a christian church was early collected, through the zeal of the apostles; and this too had of course its bishop, who in process of time assumed the name of Papa, Pope, from *Παππας*, Father.

Every reader is aware that till the reign of Constantine the Christian churches were but private associations, frequently proscribed, and totally unconnected with the political system. In those days of persecution and religious fervour, the bishops of Rome were assuredly far from aspiring to govern provinces; they would have been too happy to be left to the unmolested exercise of obscure virtues: they obtained on earth no other crown but that of martyr-

dom. Constantine permitted the churches to acquire real property, and individuals to enrich them by legacies; and with wealth ambitious prospects of worldly distinction began to open before these pastors of the flock of Christ.

They declared themselves the authorized vicegerents of Heaven, as the successors of St. Peter in the episcopal chair, founding their claim upon the words of Christ to that apostle, "On this rock will I build my church," and hence asserting that the church of Rome is the only true church, though they could not produce a tittle of evidence that Peter had ever set foot in that city.*

Forgeries of papers and documents are of frequent recurrence in the history of the temporal power of the Popes. The eighth century was the era of the most impudent of these frauds. Between the years 756 and 779 was fabricated a donation from the Emperor Constantine to Pope Sylvester, a few lines of which will be sufficient to show its palpable absurdity. "We attribute to the chair of St. Peter all the imperial dignity, glory, and power.....Moreover, we give to Sylvester and to his successors our palace of Lateran, incontestably one of the finest palaces on earth; we give him our crown, our mitre, our diadem,

* I must confess that I cannot help believing the two verses of Matthew, xvi., 18, 19, to be an interpolation by some later tool of the papal See. The punning upon the name of *Peter* and the word *rock* is quite unworthy of the lips into which it is put, and indeed absolutely inconsistent with the character of the speaker.

and all our imperial vestments; we resign to him the imperial dignity.....We give as a free gift to the holy pontiff the city of Rome and all the western cities of Italy, as well as the western cities of the other countries. To make room for him, we abdicate our sovereignty over all these provinces, and we withdraw from Rome, transferring the seat of our empire to Byzantium, since it is not just that a terrestrial emperor shall retain any power where God has placed the head of religion." It would be useless to waste a word on so clumsy a forgery, which, however, serves to convey some idea of the expedients employed in the eighth century to establish the temporal power of the Popes. It furnishes moreover a measure of the public ignorance during the succeeding ages, when this strange concession, revered by nations and even by kings, contributed to the development of the political power of the Holy See.

It was about the same time that one Isidore Mercator, or Peccator, forged the decretals of ancient Popes, of Anaclete, Clement, Evaristus, and others, down to St. Silvester. In the sixth century, Dionysius the Less could only collect the decretals from the time of St. Siricius, who died about the end of the fourth. Isidore's are long, full of commonplace, and all in the same style which, according to Fleury, is that of the eighth century much more than of the first age of the Church. "Almost all the dates are false," adds that historian, "and they carry with them internal evidence of forgery: they speak of

archbishops, primates, patriarchs, as though these titles had been adopted in the first infancy of the Church. They forbid any council, even provincial, to be held without the permission of the Pope, and represent appeals to Rome as customary." These false decretals contributed to extend the spiritual power of the Popes, and to invest them with political authority. Their mischievous effects have been ably exposed by Fleury in his *Ecclesiastical History*.

Anastasius, who compiled his *History of the Popes* at the conclusion of the ninth century, makes the first mention of alleged donations to the Holy See by Pepin and Charlemagne. The latter is represented as conferring provinces which he never possessed, and over which he had no right of sovereignty or even of conquest: and the existence of any document to certify this grant rested on no other authority than the unsupported testimony of Anastasius.

So much is certain, that before the ninth century the Popes laid claim to no independent temporal power, but acknowledged the emperors of the East or West as their sovereigns. The pretensions which they soon afterwards began to put forward were founded on those clumsy forgeries just mentioned, which, but for the extreme ignorance of the people of those days, never could have gained the slightest degree of credit.

A power, though not sovereign, may nevertheless be effective. Such was that of the Popes from the time of Charlemagne. A positive temporal power, though

subaltern, delegated, or borrowed, did thenceforward exist in the hands of the bishops of Rome; and from that time the continual wars between the priesthood and the lay sovereignty had no other object than to emancipate and to increase that power. The first thing to be done was to render it independent, and, as soon as it was or could pretend to be so, to extend its attributions, its rights, and its limits, and to transform it into a universal monarchy. Such was the general cause of all the anathemas, quarrels, and wars, of which the history of the middle ages is made up; and such the secret of the everlasting struggle of the court of Rome against most of the European powers, and more especially against whichever of them obtained the preponderance in Italy.

It is at the commencement of the 9th century then that we begin to perceive, not indeed the establishment but the first symptoms of the temporal power of the Roman prelates. The principal of the causes that could not fail to lead to this result consisted in the prodigious progress of all the ecclesiastical institutions. Several of the Popes and many other prelates had, by their virtues and talents, deserved the respect of nations and the esteem of kings: they had gained those imposing reputations which, in times of public troubles and disasters, are always the beginnings of power. Zealous missionaries had carried the light of the Gospel to most of the countries of Europe, and prepared, nay, even forwarded, by religious instructions, the civilization of some of the barbarous

nations. On all sides rose richly endowed churches and monasteries; the pious liberality of princes and private persons augmented every where, and especially at Rome, the treasures and immoveable property of the clergy; its territorial possessions gradually became extensive enough to be insensibly transformed into principalities—a metamorphosis but too easy under such weak and tottering governments. Add to this the frequency and the solemnity of councils, the general interest excited by their decisions, and the almost inevitable contact of their discussions with the order or disorder of political affairs.

Be it particularly borne in mind that, in the beginning of the eighth century, there existed no other great empire but the Eastern, and that, nevertheless, the power of the Greek emperors, limited in Asia by that of the caliphs, weakened in their own capital by internal revolutions, represented at Ravenna by exarchs destitute of ability or loyalty, was maintained with difficulty in Italy against the arms of the Lombards, and sometimes needed the influence of the Romish pontiffs for its defence. Meanwhile, the new thrones erected here and there by barbarous conquerors were already tottering under their successors, whose ignorance, generally equal to that of their subjects, seemed to provoke the enterprises of the clergy. These, more enlightened than the vulgar, eagerly seized all opportunities to augment their power. When, in 681, the council of Toledo released the subjects of Vamba from their allegiance to that

prince, it is possible that the thirty-five bishops who sat in that assembly were not aware either of the temerity or the monstrous disloyalty of such a sentence. Fleury, in his Ecclesiastical History, may well call attention to this first example of a king deposed by bishops; but he might also have remarked that such a novelty excited no scandal; that kings made no complaint against it; and that no obstacle prevented the execution of this extraordinary decree. The authority arrogated on this occasion the clergy of succeeding times seized every opportunity to confirm and to extend.

Charlemagne, the conqueror and successor of the Lombard kings, assumed the title of King of Italy, and in the year 800 was elevated to the dignity of emperor, not by the Pope alone, but by an assembly of the clergy, nobility, and people of Rome. He possessed the supreme dominion of the whole Peninsula, as far as Lower Calabria, including the Holy See, and exercised it by himself or by his delegates: he received homage from the Popes, reserved the right of confirming their elections, and with vigorous hand held their persons and possessions in subordination to his authority. He condemned the donations made to the Church to the prejudice of the children and near kindred of the donors. In 816, a capitulary of his successor, Louis le Debonnaire, declared all donations of the kind null and void. But, instead of continuing to limit sacerdotal ambition by such barriers, Louis was destined to become one of the first victims,

and thereby one of the founders, of the power of the clergy.

That weak prince committed the egregious blunder of dividing a great part of his dominions among his three sons, who leagued against him to deprive him of the rest. They were encouraged in their rebellion by the clergy; and, to conciliate these formidable adversaries, Louis summoned four councils for the examination of his conduct and the complaints which it occasioned. At these synods was broached a doctrine relative to the rights of the clergy and the duties of princes, which, so near to the time of Charlemagne's omnipotence, would appear almost incredible. One of these councils even went so far as to represent Constantine the Great as addressing the bishops in these terms: "God has given you power to judge us, but you cannot be judged by men. God has set you up over us as gods, and it is not fit that man should judge gods. This belongs only to him of whom it is written, 'God hath seated himself in the synagogue of the gods, and he judgeth them!'"

Pope Gregory IV. himself afterwards took part with the emperor's rebellious sons; and, when some of the French prelates had the courage to remonstrate in behalf of their sovereign, the pontiff insolently declared, "Know that my chair is above the throne of Louis." Gregory repaired to France, joined the rebellious brothers, and visited the camp of Louis in the assumed character of mediator. On the very night after he had quitted the emperor, the latter

was deserted by his troops, and, being obliged to surrender to his sons, he was dethroned “by the advice of the Pope,” says Fleury. The son of Charlemagne almost deserved the degrading humiliations now heaped upon him by submitting to such ignominy. Ebbo, bishop of Rheims, and other prelates, sentenced him to do public penance; on his knees before them, he made confession of his crimes, among which were included the marching of troops in Lent, and the convocation of a parliament for holy Thursday; and, dragged from convent to convent, to Compiègne, Soissons, Aix-la-Chapelle, Paris, and St. Denis, he seemed destined to end his days there, when the very excess of his afflictions excited the public pity, and roused the indignation of the people and of the great against his already divided enemies.

The subsequent dissensions among the numerous descendants of Charlemagne afforded the Popes abundant occasions to set themselves up for judges of their pretensions, to obtain, in return for the service which they rendered to some, a right to humble the others and to rule them all. Hence those enterprises of the Popes, who, looking upon themselves as dispensers of an empire of which they were but the first subjects, pretended, under the shadow of a purely spiritual power, to dispose of the sovereignty of States. Hence that authority of the bishops, who, after dethroning the father at the solicitation of the children, conceived that they had a right to elect, confirm, or depose their masters; ambitious prelates, more war-

riors than churchmen, scarcely able to read, much less write, yet quite as formidable for the spiritual thunderbolts which they hurled almost at random, as by the temporal power which they had usurped in their cities and dioceses. Hence the almost independent principalities, which the monks formed for themselves in countries where, but a few years before, they had with their own hands tilled the lands which a mistaken piety had bestowed upon them.

Though there was not yet any authentic act exalting the Pope into a sovereign, and emancipating the authority which he exercised in Rome and the surrounding districts from the imperial supremacy, yet his power was becoming *de facto* independent; and, since he fancied that, in anointing the emperors, he was actually making them; since he dared talk of their dignity as a gift for which they were indebted to him; he was no doubt strong enough to set bounds to any obedience which they might have required. So far from imposing laws upon him in his own territories, they were often thwarted by his in the exercise of their civil rights and of their political powers.

It is not the purpose of this work to trace all the successive usurpations of temporal as well as spiritual power practised by the Romish pontiffs and the clergy during the darkest ages of European ignorance, when possessions were regulated by custom only, and transactions were chronicled in the memory alone. Among those nations, those great vassals, those kings, who could neither write nor read, the most superficial in-

struction was sufficient to enable the clergy to engross the management of most civil concerns. They kept to themselves the keys both of religion and of letters; they alone could write and make out ancient writings; they assumed the functions of lawyers and notaries, drawing up wills, marriage contracts, agreements, and public acts; they extorted legacies and donations; they emancipated themselves from the secular jurisdiction, and strove to make all persons and all things amenable to their tribunal.

It was not till the latter half of the eleventh century that the whole extent of the papal pretensions was manifested, and that those pretensions began to be enforced with unbounded arrogance and inflexible perseverance. Hildebrand, the most remarkable personage of his time, was elevated to the papal throne in 1073. He was a native of Tuscany, and, it is said, the son of a carpenter, studied in France, and returned to Italy, to become the adviser and director of several successive Popes. In his ardent mind, the idea of a universal theocracy had grown up into a passion; and to the realization of this scheme all the energies of his whole life were directed. To ensure the empire of the priesthood over the rest of mankind, and the domination of the Pope over the whole priesthood, he felt the necessity of reforming their manners and concentrating their relations, of cutting them off more completely from the rest of the world, and forming them into one great family, the members of which should not recollect that they had ever be-

longed to secular families. The celibacy of the clergy was still but a general practice, introduced into almost all the churches, but likewise almost every where modified by exceptions or transgressions: Hildebrand resolved to make it a rigorous law. At his instigation, Pope Stephen IX., in 1058, declared marriage incompatible with the priesthood; treated all the wives of priests as concubines, excommunicating them and their husbands, if their union were not immediately dissolved. The clergy made some resistance; the Milanese priests in particular ventured to remonstrate, pleading the permission given them by St. Ambrose to marry one wife, provided she were a virgin: but Hildebrand, to cut short all opposition, set down the troublesome complainants as heretics.

The unlimited aggrandizement of the pontifical power continued to be the ruling principle of Hildebrand's conduct, after he had seated himself in the papal chair by the name of Gregory VII. His zeal, not only active, but audacious, obstinate, inconsiderate, was the result of a persuasion too firm to be shaken. He would have suffered martyrdom for his convictions, had circumstances required it. Like all rigid enthusiasts, he thought himself disinterested, and was, without remorse, the scourge of the world.

To this Pope are attributed twenty-seven maxims, forming a complete declaration of the sovereignty, spiritual and temporal, of the Roman pontiff, including the right of deposing all princes, of giving away all crowns, of reforming all laws. No positive proof has

been adduced that he actually drew up or dictated those articles; but all of them are to be found, either in substance or more at large, in his authentic letters, and they might fairly be called the Spirit of Hildebrand. They were the rule of his conduct, his profession of faith, which he would fain have imposed upon all Christendom. As such, it may not be amiss to give them in detail.

“The Romish Church is the only one that God has founded.

“The title of universal belongs to the Roman pontiff alone.

“He alone can depose and absolve bishops.

“His legate presides over all the bishops in every council, and may pronounce sentence of deposition against them.

“The Pope can depose absent persons.

“It is not lawful to live with such as have been excommunicated.

“He has the power, according to circumstances, to make new laws, to create new churches, to transform a chapter into an abbey, and to divide a rich bishopric into two, or to unite two poor bishoprics.

“He alone has a right to assume the attributes of empire.

“All princes must kiss his feet.

“His name is the only one to be uttered in the churches.

“It is the only name in the world.

“He has a right to depose emperors.

“He has a right to remove bishops from one see to another.

“He has a right to appoint a clerk [priest] in every church.

“He whom he has appointed may govern another church, and cannot receive a higher benefice from any private bishop.

“No council can call itself general without the order of the Pope.

“No chapter, no book, can be reputed canonical without his authority.

“No one can invalidate his sentences; he can abrogate those of all other persons.

“He cannot be judged by any one.

“All persons whatsoever are forbidden to presume to condemn him who is called to the apostolical chair.

“To this chair must be brought the more important causes of all the churches.

“The Roman church is never wrong, and will never fall into error.

“Every Roman pontiff canonically ordained becomes holy.

“It is lawful to accuse when he permits, or when he commands.

“He may, without synod, depose and absolve bishops.

“He is no Catholic who is not united to the Romish Church.

“The Pope can release the subjects of bad princes from all oaths of allegiance.”

Absurd and extravagant as these assumptions may appear, such then became, and such has never since ceased to be, the system of the court of Rome. Circumstances have sometimes enjoined forbearance, required concessions, recommended disguise; but, excepting Adrian VI. and Clement XIV., none of the Popes have retracted the maxims of Hildebrand, and the court of Rome has proclaimed, professed, and practised them, whenever it has had occasion and liberty to do so.

The circumstances of the times were most favourable to the ambitious designs of Hildebrand. Ever since the death of Otho the Great, the German empire had been declining; Italy was divided into petty States; a young king was seated on the throne of France; the Moors were masters of the greatest part of Spain; the Normans had just conquered England; and the kingdoms of the North, recently converted, and ignorant of the limits of the pontifical authority, might be expected to set an example of docility.

When Gregory saw William the Conqueror firmly seated on the throne of England, he did not scruple to summon him to pay homage for that kingdom to the apostolical chair. The pretext for this strange requisition was a charitable donation paid by the English to the Romish Church for about two centuries, and called Peter's pence. The Conqueror replied that the alms might perhaps be continued; but that it was unreasonable to demand homage from those from whom one was receiving charity. At the same time,

William forbade his new subjects to go to Rome, or to acknowledge any Pope but the one whom he should approve. Here the affair ended; for the Pope had sufficient judgment not to insist on his demand. He probably imagined that the newness of William's power in England would dispose him to desire the protection of Rome, and to purchase it by an act of vassalage: but he merely exposed his ignorance of that conqueror's power, of his energetic character, and of his ascendancy over his new subjects.

Sardinia, Dalmatia, Russia, were in the eyes of Gregory but fiefs dependent on the tiara. "In the name of St. Peter," he wrote to the Russian prince Demetrius, "we have given your crown to your son, who is to come and to receive it at our hands, on taking an oath of allegiance to us." To give a complete list of the princes whom Gregory excommunicated or threatened with excommunication, it would be necessary to mention all who reigned contemporaneously with himself: Nicephorus Botoniates, Greek emperor, whom he commanded to abdicate the crown; Boleslaus, king of Poland, whom he declared to be deposed, adding that Poland should no longer be a kingdom; Solomon, king of Hungary, whom he referred to his aged subjects to learn from them whether their country belonged to the Romish Church; the Spanish princes, to whom he wrote that St. Peter was lord paramount of all their petty States, and that it would be better for Spain to be completely subdued by the Saracens, than not to pay homage to the vicar

of Christ; Robert Guiscard, the Norman conqueror of Naples, who, to strengthen a right acquired by the sword, had consented to acknowledge himself the Pope's vassal, and whom he punished by his anathemas for the slightest disobedience; the duke of Bohemia, from whom he exacted a tribute of one hundred marks in silver; Philip I. of France, of whom he required the same kind of tribute, and whom he denounced to the French bishops as a tyrant steeped in guilt and infamy, who was unworthy of the royal title, and whose accomplices they made themselves, if they did not vigorously resist him. "Follow the example," said he, "of the Romish Church, your mother; separate yourselves from the service and the communion of Philip, if he continues hardened; let the celebration of the holy offices be interdicted throughout all France; and know that, with the assistance of God, we will deliver that kingdom from such an oppressor." But, of all the European sovereigns, the emperor Henry IV., who had most influence in Italy, was, for that very reason, most exposed to the thunderbolts of Hildebrand.

Against all these potentates, and Henry IV. in particular, Gregory had no other ally than the emperor's cousin, a woman of little ability, but extremely devout: this was Matilda, countess of Tuscany. She lived on bad terms with her husband, Godfrey, the hunchbacked, and was strongly attached to Gregory, who, as her spiritual director, wrote extremely affectionate letters to her—circumstances which have led

to the inference of a more intimate connexion between them. This princess gave all her possessions to the Holy See; and, though they were afterwards seized by the emperor Henry V. as her heir, the Popes did eventually obtain part of this donation, and called it the patrimony of St. Peter.

Henry IV. had just gained a victory over the Saxons, with whom he was at war, when two legates arrived with orders from the Pope to repair to Rome, and answer to charges which had been preferred against him. They related to investitures which he had given to bishops—a right claimed by the Pope, who threatened to excommunicate him, unless he sought pardon for his fault. Henry, in a council held at Worms, deposed Gregory, who, aware of the inefficacy of such a decree, replied to it by the following: “In the name of Almighty God, and by my full authority, I forbid Henry, the son of Henry, to govern the Teutonic kingdom and Italy; I absolve all Christians from the oaths which they have taken or may take to him; and all persons are forbidden to render any service to him as a king.” This extravagant denunciation was sufficient to wrest from the emperor the fruit of all his triumphs; civil war was rekindled in Germany; an army of confederates assembled near Spire, surrounded Henry, and obliged him to engage to suspend the exercise of his power, till judgment should be pronounced between him and the Pope, in a council at Augsburg, where the pontiff was to preside.

To prevent this definitive decision, Henry resolved to beg pardon of Gregory, and for that purpose repaired to the fortress of Canossa, where the Pope was shut up with his countess Matilda. He went without guard or retinue. He was stopped in the second court, where he suffered himself to be stripped of his garments and a hair shirt to be put on him. Barefoot, in the month of January, 1077, he awaited in the court the answer of the holy Father. That answer was that he must fast three days before he could be admitted to kiss the feet of Gregory; at the expiration of that time, the Pope would receive and absolve him, upon his promise of entire submission to the future judgment of the council of Augsburg. This excessive arrogance and tyranny revolted the Italians. Lombardy armed for Henry, whom the Germans abandoned; and, while the Empire elected another head, Italy set up another Pope.

The vengeance of Gregory's successors pursued the emperor. His son, at the instigation of Pascal II., rebelled against him, and procured his own election to the imperial dignity. The three ecclesiastical electors, the archbishops of Mentz, Cologne, and Treves, tore the diadem from his brow with their own hands; and an emperor who had distinguished himself in sixty-six battles was reduced, through the persecution of the Church, to such abject want as to be obliged to solicit, but unsuccessfully, an humble office in a church which he had himself built. When he died, the Pope would not permit the remains of

the excommunicated prince to rest in peace; they were torn from the tomb, and for five years remained unburied, till the clergy of Liege ventured to inter them, and for so doing called down upon themselves the papal anathemas.

In the 11th century originated in several churches the use of an oath by which each new-elected prelate engaged "to defend the domains of St. Peter against every aggressor; to preserve, augment, extend, the rights, honours, privileges, and powers, of the lord Pope and his successors; to observe and with all his might to enforce his decrees, ordinances, reservations, provisions, and all dispositions whatever emanating from the court of Rome; to persecute and to combat to the last extremity heretics, schismatics, and all who will not pay to the sovereign pontiff all the obedience which the sovereign pontiff shall require." This oath has been taken by bishops who had sovereigns that were not Catholics. Who could have conceived that kings, whether Catholics or not, had permitted their subjects to contract engagements so contrary to the public order of society! Complaints have been made of it in Hungary, in Tuscany, in the kingdom of Naples, and the prelates of Germany have subjected this form to restrictions. But it is so revolting in itself and so foreign to the discipline of the first ten centuries of the Church, that we cannot imagine how any one could seriously allege it as a proof of the necessity of bulls of institution.

The pontificate of Eugene III. is rendered memo-

rable in the history of the papal power by the approbation which he gave to the decrees of Gratian. The term *decrees* is here applied to a canonical compilation, completed in 1152 by Gratian, a Benedictine monk, born in Tuscany. The recent discovery of the Pandects of Justinian had revived in Italy the study of civil jurisprudence: Gratian's collection became the text-book of an ecclesiastical jurisprudence; and the first of these studies was soon deemed subordinate and supplementary to the other.

This collection is divided into three parts, one of which treats of general principles and of ecclesiastical persons; the second, of judgments; and the third, of sacred things. The repetitions, the irrelevancies, the confusion, the errors in proper names, the blunders in quotations, are the smallest faults of the author: garbled passages, chimerical canons, false decretals, lies of all sorts, abound in this monstrous work. Its success was not on that account the less rapid: it soon began to be expounded in the schools, to be quoted in the courts of justice, to be invoked in treaties; and it had almost become the public law of Europe, when returning enlightenment slowly dispelled such gross delusions.

Priests exempted from secular jurisdiction—the civil powers subjected to the ecclesiastical supremacy—the condition of persons and the documents which determine it regulated, confirmed, annulled by the canons and by the clergy—the papal power released from all restriction—the sanction of all the laws of

the Church attributed to the Holy See, independent itself of the laws published and confirmed by it—such are the positive results of this jurisprudence. It has been modified by some Catholic Churches, particularly that of France; but it has been retained pure and intact in the Romish Church, which has employed it ever since to disturb the peace of empires.

From the end of the tenth century, the decretals of Isidore had sown the seeds of pontifical omnipotence: Gratian collected and fecundated them. Represented as the source of all irrefragable decisions, as the universal tribunal for settling all differences, for dispelling all doubts, for clearing away all difficulties, the court of Rome soon found itself consulted from all quarters, by metropolitans, by bishops, by chapters, by abbots, by monks, by nobles, nay, even by princes and private individuals. The pontifical correspondence had no limits but in the tardiness of the means of communication: the affluence of questions multiplied bulls, briefs, epistles; and from these fictitious decretals, attributed to the Popes of the first centuries, have sprung, from the time of Eugene III., thousands of too authentic answers and sentences. Religious, civil, judicial, domestic matters, all in those days more or less clogged by pretended relations with the spiritual power; general interests, local disputes, private quarrels, were all referred, sometimes in the first instance, sometimes for final adjudication, to the vicar of Christ: and the court of Rome acquired that retail

influence, if I may be allowed the expression, which is most of all to be dreaded, precisely because each of its effects, separated from the rest, appears more indifferent. Isidore and Gratian transformed the Pope into a universal administrator.

So early as the first half of the twelfth century, we find that even in Rome itself doctrines closely resembling those of the reformers of the following ages were publicly promulgated. Arnold, of Brescia, one of the superior spirits of those dark and turbulent times, after studying at Paris under Abelard, returned in 1136 to Italy, full of new ideas respecting religion and the Church. His bold, independent mind, his intimate acquaintance with Christian antiquity, and his persuasive eloquence in the pulpit and in the professor's chair, gave prodigious weight to his denunciations of the ambition and despotism of the clergy. Condemned in 1139 by the second council of Lateran, he sought refuge in France, where his doctrines procured him numerous adherents, who assumed the name of Arnoldists: for the just discontent excited by the profligate manners and arrogant pretensions of the clergy had every where prepared the way for him. The excommunication pronounced against him and his followers by Pope Innocent II. could not quench the spreading flames of disaffection; and Arnold, removing to Zurich in Switzerland, preached his doctrine without molestation till 1144; when the people of Rome, having expelled the Pope, established a semblance of a republican government

in their city. Proceeding thither at the head of 2000 Swiss, Arnold proposed the restoration of consuls, tribunes, and the equestrian order of the ancient republic; he further urged the expediency of depriving the Pope of all civil power, and limiting that which the Romans were obliged to leave to the emperor. For several years the pontifical authority was not recognised in the capital, nor was it recovered till 1153 by Eugene III., aided by the influence of Frederick Barbarossa. Venerated by the people, and protected by the senate, Arnold continued to disseminate his doctrines at Rome, till the accession of Adrian IV., the only Englishman that ever sat on the pontifical throne, who, to get rid of so formidable an opponent, laid, for the first time, the whole city under an interdict. This bold measure produced universal consternation and dismay; the Romans solicited pardon, and the senate banished the reformer. Scarcely had Arnold left the city, when he was seized by the soldiers of Frederick Barbarossa; the emperor delivered him up to the Pope, by whose command he was burned alive, unknown to the Romans, at day-break, and his ashes were thrown into the Tiber, "lest," says Fleury, "the people might collect them as those of a martyr."

This service rendered to Adrian by the emperor did not prevent them from falling out. In 1155, when Frederick went to Rome to receive the imperial crown, symptoms of misunderstanding began to appear; he refused to hold the pontiff's stirrup, and

at last submitted with a very bad grace to perform that species of homage. He observed in the Lateran palace a picture representing the emperor Lothair on his knees before the Pope, receiving the crown from him, and an inscription to the effect that he thus made himself a vassal of the Holy See. He complained of this inscription, and obtained a vague promise that it should be erased—a promise that of course was not fulfilled.

In 1157, Frederick was holding his court at Besançon, whither Adrian sent legates with a letter complaining of an outrage committed on the person of the bishop of Lunden, in the dominions of the emperor. “How,” wrote the Pope, “is the impunity of such a crime to be accounted for? Is it negligence? is it indifference? Has the emperor forgotten the favours heaped upon him by the Holy See? Has not the sovereign pontiff, of his own free will, conferred on him the imperial crown? Are there not other favours which he might intend to grant him?” This language nettled the princes whom Frederick had around him: they murmured; they threatened; and when one of the legates replied, “Of whom then does the emperor hold his crown, if not of the Pope?” one of those princes, unable to control his indignation, drew his sword, and would infallibly have despatched the insolent churchman, if Frederick had not exerted his imperial authority to prevent the violence. He sent the papal envoys under an escort to their quarters, ordering them to set out very early on the morrow,

and to return to Rome by the shortest route, without stopping either with bishops or abbots by the way.

Adrian now addressed himself to the bishops of Germany, exhorting them to use their best endeavours to bring the emperor back to more humble sentiments. Their answer was firm, and judicious. "Your words," said they, "have shocked the whole court, and we cannot approve them. The emperor never can believe that he holds his dignity from you : he swears that, when the Church wants to subject thrones, that ambition does not proceed from God. He complains of pictures and inscriptions which you have, and which are insulting to his power ; and declares that he will not endure such gross affronts. We beg you to destroy those monuments of enmity between the empire and the Church ; we beseech you to appease a Christian prince by henceforward using towards him a language more conformable with the Gospel." This honest expression of the sentiments of the bishops, together with the preparations making by Frederick for going to Italy, caused Adrian to lower his tone. He condescended to explain the terms of his first letter to the emperor ; and that explanation, which was equivalent to a retractation, satisfied Frederick.

The history of the Romish See in all ages proves that pretensions once advanced by it are not very readily abandoned. It was not long before the conduct of Adrian exhibited evidence of this tenacity. In 1158, the assembled bishops and abbots having acknowledged that they held their sovereign rights

from the emperor, the pontiff disapproving this declaration, wrote a letter to Frederick, which has not been preserved, but is described by Radevic, the historian of that prince, as full of spleen and haughtiness, cloaked in very humble and gentle terms. In his answer, Frederick thought fit to place his name in the superscription before that of the Pope, in accordance with an ancient custom, instead of which a form thought more respectful had been for some time substituted. This trifle nettled his holiness; and History relates that letters of his, addressed to the Milanese and other subjects of the emperor's, instigating them to revolt, were intercepted. Those letters are not extant, but Adrian's reply to the emperor has been preserved. "To put your name before ours," writes the servant of the servants of Christ, "is arrogance, it is insolence; and to cause homage to be paid to you by bishops, by those whom the Scripture calls gods, sons of the Most High, is to violate the fidelity which you have sworn to St. Peter and to us. Hasten then to amend, lest, in attributing to yourself what does not belong to you, you should lose the crown, which we have conferred on you." This epistle was not unanswered; passions were kindled, and war was ready to break out, when the Pope died, at the very moment, says one historian, when he was pronouncing Frederick's excommunication.

It was during the pontificate of Adrian's successor, Alexander III., that the audacious conduct of Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, encouraged by the Pope,

brought a violent death upon himself, and the deepest degradation on King Henry II. The circumstances of that melancholy struggle between the sovereign authority and the omnipotence of the Church are too well known to every reader of English history to need recapitulating here. The events of the contest between John and Innocent III., attended with still more degrading results for that alike weak and wicked monarch, are equally well known.

By Pope Innocent III., the pretensions and the power of the Church were carried to an extent which, extravagant as they were, they had not previously attained. In one year he gave away of his full authority three royal crowns:—those of Wallachia, Bohemia, and Arragon. Peter II. went to Rome to receive the latter, where he did homage to the Pope for his dominions, which thus became tributary to the Holy See. But Innocent, the distributor of kingdoms, and who even gave away that of Armenia, displayed his power more frequently in anathemas. Venice, France, England, the emperors, all the first potentates in Europe, felt the force of his spiritual weapons,—setting himself up for the supreme arbiter of kings, commanding them to make war or peace, and thus, observes Fleury, “virtually proclaiming himself the only sovereign in the world.”

The emperor of the West, as sovereign of Rome, and possessing a troublesome preponderance in Italy, was more exposed than any other prince to the attacks of Innocent. To lessen the power of the

empire, it was of especial importance to re-establish the pontifical authority in Rome and in the states of the Church. The Pope therefore began by turning to account the ascendancy which his birth, his reputation, and his talents gave him over the Romans; he abolished the consulship, and, arrogating the imperial rights to himself, he invested the prefect, appointed the public officers, received the oaths of the senators. At that moment was extinguished the authority of the emperors in Rome. Orbitello, Viterbo, Umbria, the Romagna, the march of Ancona, likewise acknowledged Innocent III. for their sovereign. Thus reigning from sea to sea, he conceived hopes of conquering Ravenna, which was still wanting to complete the heritage of Matilda, to subject more and more the Two Sicilies, and, above all, to prevent them from ever being under the sceptre of the head of the empire. When most of the provinces of Italy were once under his immediate sway, he purposed to content himself with exercising elsewhere his spiritual authority: as for the states not in his possession, he would be satisfied to give them, to take them away, and to invest with them such princes as should deserve them by their constant docility.

Among the three hundred popes and anti-popes whose names History presents to us, we know of none more imposing than Innocent III. "In his actions, his principles, and the effects produced by both on the state of Europe," says an eloquent living writer, "we scarcely recognise a human being. He, in fact,

takes a stand wholly above the class of figures which form the ordinary pageant of history. The circumstances of his time, and the faculties of his nature, make us rather look for his resemblance in one of those wanderers from some higher star, in a strayed spirit dropped by accident among us, and in the garb of man allowed to follow his original propensities, or do either good which astonishes human benevolence, or evil which throws human malignity into the shade by powers which in all cases exceed the dimensions of human nature. Without charging the Pope with being altogether a demon, it must be acknowledged that some of his actions nearly approached the character.”*

His pontificate is the most worthy of the attention and study of European monarchs. Here they may learn how temporal power, united with ecclesiastical functions, exaggerates them, and changes their nature; to what universal supremacy the papacy aspires; what tyranny it exercises to that end over princes, as well as people, when political circumstances prove ever so slightly favourable to sacerdotal ambition. A Pope, said Innocent, a vicegerent of Christ, if less than God, is greater than man: he is the luminary of day; the civil authority being only the pale orb of night. It was Innocent who discovered in the first chapter of Genesis this celestial theory of the two powers; and it was with such allegories, evidences of the ignorance of his age and of his own, that he subjugated the West, disturbed the East, ruled the earth,

* Foreign Monthly Review, No. iv., p. 342.

and deluged it with blood. "Sword, sword," he exclaimed, when informed of the landing of the French in England, "sword, leap from the scabbard; sword, whet thyself to exterminate!" Such was the text of his last discourse.

Innocent was the first to take advantage of the spirit which produced the crusades to the East, by transferring their name to other leagues formed or fomented by the Church of Rome. He made the enormous power of a word, which for above a century had not failed to excite throughout Europe the strongest and the blindest enthusiasm, subservient to his various political designs. He therefore preached a crusade against England, when he wished to dethrone king John; a crusade against the Hungarians; when he set himself up for the judge of their intestine dissensions; a crusade against the king of Norway, when he purposed to tear the crown from his head; but, above all, a crusade against the Albigenses, a sect which had spread over the whole South of France. Add to this that Innocent, if not the inventor of the Inquisition, which may be termed a permanent crusade, was the actual founder of that horrible institution, by employing it as an engine of persecution against the Albigenses. Let all these facts and their consequences be duly considered, and then say if in the whole range of history there is to be found scarcely one individual by whom a greater amount of misery has been inflicted on mankind.

The grand engines by which the Popes were enabled

to maintain their usurped supremacy over temporal sovereigns were excommunication and interdict. By the one, refractory princes were excluded from all the offices of the Church, and their subjects were forbidden on the like penalty to render them assistance or service of any kind: by the other, the interdict, the effects of excommunication were extended to a city, a province, a whole kingdom. It released subjects from their oaths of allegiance to their sovereign, and forbade foreigners to hold any intercourse or commerce with them. The nation was deprived of all the public exercises of religion: the churches were shut up; the altars were stripped of their ornaments; the crosses, the relics, the images of saints, were laid upon the ground, and carefully covered up, as if the very air might pollute them by its contact. The bells were removed from the steeples. Mass was celebrated with closed doors, and none but the priests were allowed to be present at the ceremony. The clergy refused to marry, to baptise, or to bury; till the superstitious people rose in rebellion, and compelled their rulers to submit to the commands of the vicegerent of God.

This measure was first resorted to by Gregory V., in 998, against France, whose king Robert refused to put away his wife Bertha, as the Pope required him to do, because she was related to him in the fourth degree. Threatened with a general rebellion, the king was at length forced to comply. Still more disastrous were the consequences of the interdict laid upon England by Innocent III., owing to the refusal of

John to submit to the tax of Peter's pence, and to relinquish to the Pope the right of appointment to English bishoprics. After it had lasted for six years, John was forced not only to accede to the Papal demands, but even to surrender his crown, and receive it back as a free gift from the Church, besides submitting to the most humiliating personal degradations.

While the Popes were thus laying the foundation of a universal monarchy, temporal as well as spiritual, the doctrines of Christianity were gradually more and more perverted from their original beneficent tendency and simplicity. The worship of images and the veneration of the relics of reputed saints and martyrs were followed by the canonization of persons eminent for their sanctity, or rather for their devotion to the Romish See. They were invoked as mediators between God and man: towns and kingdoms chose each their tutelary saint. They were able to avert all dangers, and to heal all maladies, and the virtues which they possessed they imparted to their images. "The clergy," says Southey, in his *Book of the Church*, "promoted every fantastic theory and every vulgar superstition which could be made gainful to themselves, and devised arguments for them, which they maintained with all the subtleties of scholastic logic. No language can exaggerate the enormity of the falsehood thus promulgated, nor the spirit of impious audacity in which they were conceived: yet some of the most monstrous and the most palpably false received the full sanction of the papal authority; the superstitions

founded upon them were legitimated by papal bulls; and festivals in commemoration of miracles which never happened, nay, worse than this — of some of the most blasphemous and flagitious impostures, were appointed in the Romish calendar, where at this day they hold their place.”

But, among all the saints whose names grace that calendar, none found such favour in the eyes of the Catholic priesthood as the Virgin Mary. She was unanimously exalted to the highest rank in the mythology of Popery. Her image was to be seen not only in every church but in every street; she was worshipped under innumerable appellations; and it was even proposed at one of the councils that she should be declared the fourth person of the Godhead. The house in which she lived at Nazareth is still shown at Loretto, whither it was carried entire by four angels. The story of its journey, and of the miracles and other evidences of its genuineness, received the sanction of successive Popes, and was printed in all languages for the edification of the pilgrims of every Christian nation who flocked to this celebrated shrine.

The Bible, on the other hand, became a proscribed book, which the laity were forbidden to read in the vernacular language. Public worship itself was ordered to be performed in Latin, an unknown tongue to the great mass of those who heard it. The clergy, conscious that what they taught as Christianity was not to be found in the Scriptures, now set up in their stead the Unwritten word, or tradition, such passages from

the Fathers as could be construed into a sanction of their corruptions, and legends too childish for nursery tales.

As a new source of revenue, purgatory was invented, in order to make the dead as well as the living tributary to the rapacity of Rome. The papist was taught that the redemption obtained by Christ exempted from eternal punishment only; and that even the repentant who had confessed and received absolution would still have to suffer for their sins. Purgatory was therefore invented — a place so near the region of everlasting torment that the same fire pervades both. No bodily pain can convey an idea of the agony inflicted by a single spark of this fire. Here the candidate for happiness is purified by sufferings inflicted more particularly on the member by which he has sinned; but their intensity may be mitigated and their duration abridged by means of masses said for his soul, and of indulgences granted by the Pope; for his power extends over this dreadful place. If the vicerent of God wished to promote a new practice of devotion, or to encourage a particular shrine, or to excite men to slaughter their unoffending fellow-creatures, he granted to those who should promote these objects a dispensation for so many years of purgatory; sometimes for centuries or thousands of years, and the indulgence was often plenary — “a toll-ticket,” says Southey, “enabling the soul to pass scot-free.” The Church, in its infinite benevolence, sold these indulgences, making the act of purchasing them, and thus

contributing to its wants, a merit of itself to deserve so inestimable a reward.

To rivet the chains of slavery upon the souls as well as the bodies of men too firmly to be thrown off, private, or, at is called, auricular, confession of sins to a priest was made an imperative duty of all Catholics of both sexes, at certain times and seasons. "Of all the practices of the Romish Church," says Southey in the work already quoted, "this is the one which has proved most injurious;* and if it be regarded in connexion with the celibacy of the clergy, the cause will be apparent why the state of morals is generally so much more corrupt in Catholic than in Protestant countries. This obvious and enormous mischief is not its only evil consequence. The uses of conscience were at an end when it was delivered into the keeping of a confessor. Actions then, instead of being tried by the eternal standard of right and wrong, on which the unsophisticated heart unerringly pronounces, were judged by the rules of a pernicious casuistry, the intent of which was to make men content with themselves on the cheapest terms. The inevitable effect was that the fear of the human laws became the only restraint upon evil propensities, when men were taught to believe that the account with Divine Justice

* "It is notorious, and will be attested by all who have seen them, that the books of religious instruction which are put into the hands of young Catholics, particularly those touching auricular confession, are indecent, gross, and filthy, beyond all conception."—Gilly's *Excursions to the Mountains of Piedmont*, 4to., p. 155, note.

might be easily settled. Tables were actually set forth by authority, in which the rate of absolution for any imaginable crime was fixed, and the most atrocious might be committed with spiritual impunity for a few shillings. The foulest murderer and parricide, if he escaped the hangman, might at this price set his conscience at ease concerning all farther consequences.

“The Church of Rome,” continues Southey, “appears to have delighted in insulting as well as in abusing the credulity of mankind, and to have pleased itself with discovering how far it was possible to subdue and degrade the human intellect. If farther proof were needed, it would be found in the prodigious doctrine of transubstantiation. According to this, in the sacrament, when the words of consecration have been pronounced, the bread becomes that same actual body of flesh and blood, in which Christ suffered upon the cross; remaining bread to the sight, touch, and taste, yet ceasing to be so; and into how many parts soever the bread may be broken, the whole entire body is contained in every part. .

“Of all the corruptions of Christianity, there was none that the Popes so long hesitated to sanction as this. At length, at the fourth Lateran council, it was declared by Innocent III. to be a tenet necessary to salvation. With the people this doctrine had become popular for its very extravagance; with the clergy, because they grounded upon it their loftiest pretensions..... The priest, when he performed this

stupendous function, had before his eyes and held in his hands the Maker of heaven and earth; and the inference which they deduced from so blasphemous an assumption was, that the clergy were not to be subject to any secular authority, seeing that they could create God their Creator. Let it not be supposed that the statement is in the slightest degree exaggerated; it is delivered faithfully in their own words.

“ If such then were the power of the clergy, even of the meanest priest, what must be attributed to their earthly head, the successor of St. Peter! They claimed for him a plenitude of power, and he exercised it over the princes of Christendom in its fullest meaning. According to the canons, the Pope was as far above all kings as the sun is greater than the moon. He was king of kings and lord of lords, though he subscribed himself the servant of servants. The immediate and sole rule of the world belonged to him by natural, moral, and divine right; all authority depending upon him. As supreme king, he might impose taxes upon all Christians; and the Popes declared it was to be held as a point necessary to salvation that every human creature is subject to the Roman pontiff. That he might depose kings was averred to be so certain a doctrine, that it could only be denied by madmen, or through the instigation of the devil: it was more pernicious and intolerable to deny that than to err concerning the sacraments..... Nay, he might take away kingdoms and empires with

or without cause, and give them to whom he pleased : though the sovereign whom he should depose were in every respect not merely blameless but meritorious, it was reason enough for the change that the Pope deemed it convenient. The head of the Church was Vice-God : men were commanded to bow at his name as at the name of Christ. The proudest sovereigns waited upon him like menials, led his horse by the bridle, and held his stirrup while he alighted ; and there were ambassadors who prostrated themselves before him, saying, ‘ O thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us ! ’

“ The advocates of the papal power proclaimed that any secular laws which might be passed against a decree of the Roman pontiff were in themselves null and void ; and that all pontifical decrees ought for ever to be observed by all men like the word of God : to reject them was a sin never to be remitted. Christ had bestowed upon the Pope, when he spake as such, the same infallibility which resided in himself ; consequently, if he should enjoin vices to be committed and prohibit virtues, the Church would be bound to believe that vices were good and virtues evil. He could change the nature of things, and make injustice justice. Under God, the salvation of all the faithful depended on him, and the commentators even gave him the blasphemous appellation of our Lord God the Pope.

“ All this was certain, because the Church was infallible. Where this infallibility resided, the Roma-

nists have differed among themselves ; some vesting it in the Pope, others requiring the concurrence of a general council. Infallible, however, it was determined that the Catholic Church must be ; and thus the key-stone was put to this prodigious structure of imposture and wickedness."

A necessary consequence of notions so arrogant, of doctrines which taught that there was no possibility of attaining salvation out of the bosom of the Romish Church, which inculcated the duty of persecuting and if possible exterminating all whom it was pleased to call heretics, and gave the murderers a right to seize the property of the victims, was a spirit of intolerance, to which History can scarcely furnish a parallel, unless perhaps in the immediate successors of the Prophet of Mecca. This spirit, kindled by the fundamental maxims of the Catholic religion, was kept alive by the orders of Mendicant monks, which, instituted about the commencement of the thirteenth century, formed in every country a standing army of zealous agents of popery, exempted from secular and episcopal jurisdiction, and authorized to travel about wherever they pleased, preaching, reading mass, shriving, unobstructed by the parochial clergy, and supporting themselves by the sale of indulgences, and by contributions levied upon rich and poor. These ignorant enthusiasts successfully propagated, more especially among the lower classes, their own ridiculous superstitions, their detestation of heretics, and their cruel appetite for blood ; and such influence did

they acquire over the public mind, that their efforts facilitated, if they did not in some cases stimulate, those inhuman barbarities practised in almost all the countries of Christendom for the glory of God and the welfare of the Church.

The Catholics affect to turn the charge of intolerance against the Protestants themselves, forgetting or wilfully shutting their eyes to the fact that the intolerance occasionally exhibited by the Protestants soon after the Reformation was but a relic of Popery, which the principles whereon that Reformation was founded were destined ere long to destroy. A glance at the page of History will convince every reader that the Catholics have invariably been the first to persecute; that, if the Protestants ever appeared in the character of persecutors, it was after they had been provoked and by way of retaliation: whereas, the persecutions inflicted by the Catholics were mostly systematic, often enjoined by superior orders; they were regarded as religious and meritorious acts; they were preconcerted and executed in cold blood.

It is idle to adduce the execution of Servetus at Geneva, the case of the two Arians burned in London in the time of James I., the hardships inflicted on the Nonconformists under Charles II., and other facts of that kind. What are these compared with the massacres committed by the hordes of the Crusaders, under Peter the Hermit, on the Jews in the cities of Western Germany; the extermination of the Albigenses; the persecutions of the Vaudois; the slaughter of

millions of human beings in America, in the name of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary; the massacres of St. Bartholomew and in Ireland; the permanent persecution of the Inquisition, and the auto da fés of Spain, Portugal, and Italy, for centuries; the dragonnades in the Cevennes; the expatriation of hundreds of thousands of families from Spain, France, Salzburg; and, to crown the bloody catalogue of Catholic persecutions, we may add the assassination of two kings of France, Henry III. and Henry IV.!

It is to some of the most striking of these scenes, some of those in which Popes or papal influence are immediately concerned, that I am about to call the attention of the reader.

II. PERSECUTION OF THE ALBIGENSES.

At the commencement of the 13th century, France, instead of forming a single kingdom, was under the influence of four sovereigns, on each of whom several great vassals were dependent. The northern provinces constituted the kingdom of France, properly so called, in which the Flemish language was spoken both by prince and people. In the west was an English France, in the east German France, and in the south a Spanish or Aragonese France. Till the reign of Philip Augustus, the first of these divisions was inferior to all the others in extent, wealth, and power: but that monarch had, by a concurrence of fortunate circumstances, enlarged his dominions by reconquering half of the possessions of England, which still held the province of Aquitaine. German France had still its former limits, though two of the kingdoms which composed it, Lorraine and Burgundy, had united themselves more closely with the Empire. The kingdom of Provence, on the other hand, had so relaxed the ties which bound it to the imperial crown that its great vassals might be considered as absolutely independent, and the most powerful of its States, the county of Provence,

belonging to the king of Aragon, in reality formed a part of Aragonese France.

The king of Aragon, like the king of England, might be regarded as a French prince. The greater part of his dominions, even beyond the Pyrenees, and as far as the Ebro, were reputed to belong to the ancient monarchy of Charlemagne, and, in consequence, owed homage to the crown of France. The reigning sovereign, Peter II., had acquired, either by marriages, by treaties of protection, or by grants of fiefs, the sway over a great number of French nobles, some of whom were vassals of the king of France, others of the emperor, but who nevertheless all of them obeyed the Spanish monarch alone. The Counts of Bearn, Armagnac, Bigorre, Cominges, Foix, and Roussillon, lived under his protection, and served in his armies. The viscounts of Narbonne, Beziers, and Carcassonne, and the lord of Montpellier, acknowledged him as their superior; while the powerful count of Toulouse, in the heart of his territories and surrounded by his vassals, had great difficulty to preserve his independence.

Languedoc, Provence, Catalonia, and all the contiguous countries, under the sway of the king of Aragon, were inhabited by a race of men, industrious, intelligent, addicted to commerce and the arts, and still more to poetry. These people had formed the Provençal language, which was distinguished from the Roman Walloon, or French, by its elegance, harmony, copiousness, and flexibility; and this language, studied in preference by all the wits of the age, used

in numberless compositions on war and love, seemed at that time destined to become the first and the most polished of the languages of Europe. Those by whom it was spoken relinquished the name of French for that of Provençaux, and strove by means of their language to form themselves into a nation distinct from the French, to whom they were inferior in the art of war, though they had far outstripped them in the progress of civilization.

For nearly four centuries, the South of France had been like an island, flourishing in the enjoyment of uninterrupted serenity in the midst of a tempestuous ocean. The courts of the numerous petty princes among whom it was divided, with their knights and ladies, their troubadours and jongleurs, prided themselves on being models of taste and politeness: they were engaged in an incessant round of diversions — tournaments, courts of love, at which questions of galantry were gravely discussed and decided, competitions in poetry, where fair ladies delivered the prizes awarded to superior excellence. The towns were numerous and flourishing: they were all governed, according to forms more or less republican, by consuls elected by the people; so that they differed but little from the Italian republics with which they traded.

Amidst this increasing prosperity, that fine country was consigned to the fury of hordes of fanatics, its inhabitants slaughtered, its commerce destroyed, and its dialect degraded from the rank of a poetical language to that of a *patois*. In consequence of this

horrible revolution, the Provençaux ceased to form a nation, the influence of the king of Aragon over a considerable part of France was annihilated, and the dominion of the French king was finally extended to the Mediterranean.

The preaching of a religious reform among the people of Provence was the cause of the devastation of that fine country. Too early enlightened and advancing too rapidly in the career of civilization, they excited the jealousy and hatred of the barbarians by whom they were surrounded. A struggle ensued between the lovers of light and the lovers of darkness, between the champions of despotism and those of liberty: that party which was bent on checking the advance of the human mind had on its side the pernicious ability of its leaders, the fanaticism of its agents, and the number of its soldiers. It triumphed; it annihilated its adversaries; and such cruel use did it make of its victory that the vanquished party could never again raise its head in the same provinces, or among the same race of men.

The clergy, in the countries where the Provençal language was spoken, had been enriched by immense endowments; but the high dignities in the Church were almost always reserved for members of powerful families, who led a life of debauchery, while the inferior orders of the priesthood, selected from among the vassals of the nobles, their peasants, and their slaves, retained the brutality, the ignorance, and the abject spirit of their servile origin. The people of these

provinces were too enlightened not to feel contempt for the vices of the ecclesiastics; and so general was this sentiment, that expressions most derogatory to churchmen had become proverbial. "May I be a priest," said they, "rather than do such or such a thing!" The disposition of their minds was nevertheless religious; and that devotion which they could not find in the Church they sought among sectarians.

These had become numerous in the South of France, and the most ancient historian of the persecution asserts that Toulouse "had, from its first foundation, very rarely, if ever, been free from that pest of heresy which the fathers transmitted to their children;" and that "their opinions had been handed down in Gaul, from generation to generation, almost from the origin of Christianity"—that is, in other words, that the pure and original principles of Christianity had been handed down in Gaul from the first planting of that religion there; that the people had, as far as their opportunities would allow, resisted the usurpations and corruptions of the Church of Rome; and that the Albigenses were the inheritors of those principles, mingled doubtless with various errors, which their slender means of true religious instruction would not allow them to escape.

The name of Albigenses was derived from the Albigeois, a district in which the town of Albi is situated, where, as well as at Toulouse, the dissenters from the doctrines and practices of the Romish Church were particularly numerous; and hence they

spread over the whole South of France. Their religious opinions very nearly resembled those of the reformers of a much later period. They considered the Scriptures as the only source of faith and religion, without regard to the authority of the Fathers and of tradition. They held the entire faith, according to all the articles of the apostles' creed. They rejected all the external rites of the dominant church, excepting baptism and the Lord's supper—as temples, vestures, images, crosses, the worship of holy relics, and the rest of the sacraments. They rejected purgatory, and masses and prayers for the dead. They admitted no indulgences or confessions of sin with any of their consequences; held the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist as only signs, denying the corporal presence of Christ in the latter. They held that monasticism was a putrid carcase, and vows the inventions of men, and that the marriage of the clergy was lawful and necessary. Finally, they declared the Roman Church to be the whore of Babylon, refused obedience to the Pope and the bishops, and denied that the former had any authority over other churches, or the power of either the civil or the ecclesiastical sword.

No wonder, then, if the enemies of these people have represented their doctrines with such characters only as would make them appear the most hideous, and mingled with all sorts of fables calculated to embitter the minds of papists against those who professed them. While, however, they accused them of encou-

raging the utmost licentiousness and debauchery, they admitted that, to all appearance, these heretics observed irreproachable chastity; that, in their zeal for truth, they never, upon any occasion, resorted to a lie; and that such was their charity that they were always ready to sacrifice themselves for others. Indeed, it was some time before their doctrines were branded as heretical; and, as several prelates of the Church had set the example of this reform, those who adopted them were under no apprehension of going astray; and Rome herself had sometimes considered the Albigenses, together with those new religious societies called Paterini, Catherini, and Poor Men of Lyons, as so many monastic orders formed to rekindle the fervour of the public, and having no idea of shaking off her yoke.

It was Innocent III. who, on ascending the pontifical throne in the vigour of age, seemed first to be sensible of the important consequences likely to result from an independence of spirit which was already tending to revolt. His predecessors, engaged in a struggle with the two Henries and Frederick Barbarossa, had need of all their force to defend themselves against those emperors; but Innocent, whose genius grasped and ruled the world, was alike incapable of indulgence and pity. At the same time that he was overturning the political balance of Italy and Germany, threatening by turns the kings of Spain, France, and England, assuming the tone of a master with the sovereigns of Bohemia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Norway,

and Armenia; that he was alternately directing and reprimanding the crusaders engaged in overthrowing the Greek empire and in erecting in its stead the Latin empire at Constantinople; Innocent, as though he had no other business upon his hands, watched, attacked, punished, all discordance of opinions with those of the Romish Church, all independence of spirit, all exercise of the faculty of thought in religious matters.

Though it was in the provinces where the Provençal language was spoken, and especially in Languedoc, that the reformed doctrines of the Albigenses had made most progress, they spread rapidly in other parts of Christendom, in Italy, Flanders, Lorraine, Germany, and Spain. Innocent judged, both from disposition and policy, that the Church ought not to keep any terms with these sectarians; that if she neglected to crush them, to exterminate their race, and to strike terror into Christendom, their example would soon be followed, and the sparks which were every where seen smouldering would soon set the whole Roman world on fire. He therefore directed his ministers not to convert, but to burn the leaders, to disperse the flocks, and to confiscate the property of all who dared think otherwise than he did. He insisted that the provinces in which the reformation was but commencing should take the lead in punishing it: accordingly, several heads of the new Church were doomed to the flames at Nevers, in 1198, and in the following years. The Emperor Otho IV., a creature

of Innocent's, issued at his instigation an edict for the destruction of the Paterini, or, as they were also called in Italy, Gazari. But a number of gentlemen and high nobles had themselves adopted the new opinions, and, so far from intending to persecute, protected the professors of them: while others regarded these people as industrious vassals, whom they could not destroy without diminishing their own power and revenues. The Pope tried whether he could not arm an immediate interest and a brutal rapacity against this provident economy of the barons. He relinquished to them the confiscation of all the property of the heretics; he exhorted them to seize it, to condemn them to exile after they had stripped them of every thing, and to threaten them with death if they dared to return to their homes. At the same time, Innocent fulminated anathemas against all those lords who should refuse to confiscate the possessions of the heretics for their own benefit, and laid their lands under an interdict.

The province of Narbonne was more particularly the object of the Pope's attention: so early as the year 1193, the first of his pontificate, he sent thither two monks belonging to the abbey of Citeaux, Guy and Regnier, who were commissioned to seek out and to punish heresy, and invested for this purpose with all the authority of the Holy See. These men may be considered as having laid the first foundation of the detestable Inquisition. In the following year, Innocent appointed Regnier his legate in the four

provinces of Embrun, Aix, Arles, and Narbonne, and enjoined the four archbishops and all their suffragans to execute strictly the orders of the monk. Regnier having fallen sick, the Pope gave him an assistant in Peter de Castelnau, archdeacon of Maguelonne, whose zeal, still more intemperate than that of his predecessors, was worthy of the sentiments inspired by the mere name of the Inquisition.

The errand of the papal commissioners was not confined to the spying of consciences, to the confiscation of the goods of heretics, and to their banishment and execution. They travelled through the province, with a great number of priests and friars, preaching against those who had forsaken the Romish doctrines, or disputing with them. It was more especially when the lord of the place favoured the new opinions that, not daring to employ force, they had recourse to the power of their logic. They took care to get judges of these intellectual combats appointed beforehand; and, according to their own accounts, they always came off victorious. When the missionaries had puzzled their antagonists with captious questions, or beaten them according to all the rules of the schools, they would say to the inhabitants of the place where they happened to be, "Why do ye not drive them out? Why do ye not exterminate them?"—"We cannot," they replied; "we have been brought up with them, we have relations among them, and we see what virtuous lives they lead."—"Thus," continues a contemporary writer, "does the spirit of lying, by the

mere appearance of a pure and spotless life, lead these imprudent wretches from the truth!"

There was another cause, it is true, which slackened the persecution. The inquisitors, by their arrogance, had offended all classes of society, and raised up a host of enemies against themselves. They accused some of the bishops of simony, others of negligence in the performance of their duties: on such pretexts they deposed the archbishop of Narbonne, and the bishops of Toulouse and Viviers; at the same time they annoyed the count of Toulouse and all the lords of the country by accusations incessantly repeated; they thus deprived themselves of the gratification of seeing so many fires as they would fain have kindled. To gain some popularity, they strove in their sermons to confound the heretics with the *routiers*, mercenary soldiers, mostly foreigners, known also in the South of France by the name of Catalans, as they were in the north by that of Brabanters. The *routiers* were men without religion or law; they pillaged the churches and the priests, but they had no connexion whatever with the heretics, and took no interest in doctrinal questions and controversies. They were, nevertheless, offended at the sermons directed against them, and revenged themselves in their turn on the missionaries and the inquisitors.

Raymond VI., count of Toulouse, who had succeeded his father in 1194, and who had availed himself of the arms of the *routiers* in his frequent wars, shared the resentment of the papal emissaries. In the spring of 1207, he was on the banks of the Rhone,

engaged in hostilities with the barons of Baux and other lords of those parts, when Castelnau, the legate, undertook to make peace between them. The barons promised that, if he could obtain Raymond's acquiescence in their demands, they would employ all the forces which they had collected in the extermination of the heretics. The count of Toulouse, however, was not disposed to renounce his rights for the sake of seeing a hostile army enter his territories, to plunder and slaughter such of his subjects as the priests should be pleased to point out. He, therefore, refused his assent; and the legate, in his rage, excommunicated him, laid an interdict upon his dominions, and wrote to the Pope to obtain the confirmation of this sentence.

Audacious as the conduct of this legate had been, Innocent determined not to disavow it. Apparently he was seeking an occasion for commencing hostilities, well aware that, from the progress which the new opinions had made, the executioners would be insufficient to extirpate the heresy, and that the sword must be employed in the work of slaughter. On the 29th of May, 1207, he wrote himself to count Raymond, for the purpose of confirming the sentence of excommunication pronounced by his legate, and his letter began thus:—"If we could open your heart, we should there find and show you the detestable abominations which you have committed; but, as it is harder than stone, it is in vain to knock at it with the words of salvation; it would be impossible to pene-

trate it. Pestilential man ! what pride has taken possession of your heart, and what is your folly to refuse to be at peace with your neighbours, and to defy the divine laws by protecting the enemies of the faith ! If you dread not everlasting flames, ought you not to fear the temporal punishments which you deserve for so many crimes ?”

So insulting a letter, addressed to a sovereign, must have revolted his pride ; nevertheless, as we are told by Pierre de Vaux Cernay, “ the wars which the Provençal nobles made upon him at the instigation of the man of God (Castelnau), and the excommunication which he every where promulgated against the count, compelled him at last to accept those same conditions of peace, and to bind himself to them by an oath : but as often as he swore to observe them, so often did he perjure himself.”

Neither the Pope nor his legate was acquainted with any other means of conversion than war, slaughter, and devastation. It was in the same year, 1207, that Innocent first bethought him of preaching a crusade against the Albigenses, and as the princes of the country were too tardy in the work of extermination, he resolved to invite strangers to undertake it. On the 17th of November, he wrote to king Philip Augustus, exhorting him to make war upon the heretic enemies of God and the Church ; promising that his compliance should be rewarded in this world with the confiscation of all their effects ; in the other with the same indulgences that were earned by those who went

to fight the infidels in the Holy Land. At the same time he addressed similar letters to the duke of Burgundy, to the counts of Nevers and Dreux, to the countesses of Troie, Vermandois, and Blois, and to all the counts, barons, knights, and true believers of the kingdom of France. Before these letters could produce their effect, a sanguinary catastrophe redoubled the rage of the Pope and kindled the sacred war.

Count Raymond, when he signed the peace with his enemies, had engaged to exterminate the heretics in his territories; but Castelnau, conceiving that he was too lukewarm in this business, went to St. Gilles, where the count had appointed to meet the two legates, reproached him to his face with his indulgence, which he termed cowardice, called him perjurer, favourer of heretics, tyrant, and again excommunicated him. Raymond threatened to make Castelnau pay for his insolence with his life. Regardless of this menace, the legates left his court, and, on the 14th of January, 1208, arrived at a small inn on the bank of the Rhone, where they purposed to pass the following day. A gentleman of the count's chanced to be at the same house, or perhaps he had followed them thither: on the morning of the 15th, after mass, he got into a dispute with Castelnau on the subject of heresy and its punishment. The legate had never been sparing of the most aggravating language towards persons who favoured toleration: the gentleman, already exasperated by the insolence of the churchman to his lord, and finding himself personally

insulted, drew his dagger, stabbed him in the side, and killed him.

On the intelligence of this murder, the rage of Innocent was unbounded. Raymond had not taken a more direct part in the death of Castelnau than Henry II. had done in that of Becket; but Innocent was far more haughty and implacable than Alexander III. He immediately published a bull, addressed to all the counts, barons, and knights of the four provinces of southern Gaul, in which he declared that it was the devil who had excited his prime minister Raymond, count of Toulouse, against the legate of the Holy See. He laid under interdict all the places that should harbour the murderers of Castelnau; he ordered that the count should be publicly anathematized in all the churches; "and," he adds, "as, according to the canonical sanctions of the Holy Fathers, no faith ought to be kept with those who do not keep faith to God, or are separated from the communion of the faithful, we release, by the apostolical authority, all those who deem themselves bound to this count by any oath, either of alliance or fealty; we permit every Catholic man, saving the right of the lord paramount, to seize his person, to take and keep his lands, especially for the purpose of extirpating heresy in them."

This first bull was soon followed by others equally fulminating, to excite all who were able to co-operate in the destruction of the count of Toulouse. The Pope wrote to Philip Augustus, exhorting him to march in person to this war for the extermination of

heretics, who were worse, he said, than Saracens, and to strip the count of Toulouse of all his territories. He wrote at the same time to the archbishops of Lyons and Tours, to the bishops of Paris and Nevers, and to the abbot of Citeaux, urging them to concur in this holy enterprise.

The king of France was too much engaged with his projects against England and the German emperor to think of taking the field against heretics ; but the monks of Citeaux, empowered by Innocent to preach the crusade among the people, fell to work with an ardour not equalled even by that of Peter the Hermit. The Pope, in the excess of his hatred, had granted to all who should take part in this crusade against the people of Provence more extensive indulgences than had ever been offered by his predecessors to those who should assist in the deliverance of the Holy Land. These new crusaders, who were distinguished from those of the East by wearing the cross on the breast and not on the shoulder, as soon as they had assumed this sacred emblem, were under the protection of the Holy See ; they were dispensed from paying interest for their debts, and withdrawn from the jurisdiction of all the tribunals ; and the war which they were called upon to wage at their own doors, almost without danger and without expense, was to atone for all the sins and crimes of a whole life. The faith in the power of indulgences, a thing scarcely conceivable at the present day, had not yet begun to cool. The barons of France, like those of all Christendom, firmly

believed that by fighting in the Holy Land they should make sure of paradise. But these distant expeditions had been attended with so many disasters, so many hundred thousand Christians had perished in Asia, or by the way, of famine, want, or disease, that others were discouraged from following them. It was, therefore, with transports of joy that the faithful accepted the new pardons which were offered them. War was their passion, and pity for the vanquished had never been a drawback from this pleasure; the discipline of the sacred wars had always been much less severe than that of political wars: in the former they could, without remorse and likewise unrestrained by their officers, pillage property, slaughter all the men, violate the women and children. The crusaders of the East knew indeed that the distance to which they were going was so great that they had scarcely any chance of bringing home with them the booty gained by the sword. Here, instead of having to combat foes inured to arms, they would find no adversaries but peaceful citizens, who would be given up to their pleasure, and whose property they could carry away with them in kind. Accordingly, never was the cross more readily and unanimously assumed; and among the first to engage in this so-called *holy* war were the duke of Burgundy, Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, and the count of Nevers.

The abbot of Citeaux and his whole fraternity distinguished themselves by their zeal in preaching this war of extermination. The seven or eight hundred

convents of his order, that of the Bernardins, already established in France, Germany, and Italy, seized upon the crusade against the Albigenses as their particular province. They promised, in the name of the Pope, St. Peter, and St. Paul, plenary remission of all sins committed from the day of birth to that of death, to all those who should fall in this holy expedition. But, while the Bernardins were thus raising troops for the crusade, the Pope directed a new fraternity, at the head of which he placed St. Dominic, a Spaniard, to go on foot to the villages of the heretics, to preach to them, to manifest all the zeal of Christian charity in their behalf, to win their confidence, and then to obtain precise information of the names, number, and abodes of such as had seceded from the Church, and to consign them to the flames as soon as his partisans had gained the upper hand. Such was the origin of the order of the friars' preachers of St. Dominic, or Inquisitors, which, after a trial of seven years in the diocese of Toulouse, was confirmed by the Council of Lateran in 1215.

The countries more especially devoted to vengeance, as the nurseries of heresy, were the territories of the count of Toulouse, and those of his nephew Raymond Roger, viscount of Alby, Beziers, Carcassonne, and Limoux. Though Raymond of Toulouse had gained some distinction as a warrior, he was a weak, mild, timid man, desirous of saving his subjects from confiscation and slaughter, but still more desirous of saving himself from persecution. His nephew, on the

other hand, was generous, bold, and impetuous. He was now twenty-four years of age; at fourteen, he had succeeded his father, and during his minority his territories had been governed by guardians who inclined towards the new doctrines. These two princes, learning that the abbot of Citeaux, who was at the head of the crusade, had been appointed by the Pope his legate in the provinces against which it was directed, strove to avert the storm. They went to Aubenaz in the Vivarais, where he then was, protested that they had no connexion with the heresy, and had not had any hand in the murder of Castelnau; and they desired that they might at least be heard before they were condemned. The legate received them with the utmost haughtiness, declared that he could do nothing for them, and that, if they wished to obtain any alleviation of the measures adopted against them, it was to the Pope they must apply. From this language Raymond Roger concluded that nothing was to be expected from negotiation, and that the only course they had left was to throw garrisons into all their strong places, and to prepare for an obstinate defence; but the count of Toulouse, seized with terror, declared that he was ready to submit to every thing, to wreak himself the vengeance of the churchmen upon his subjects, nay, to go to war with his own family, rather than bring the crusaders into his territories. The two relatives could not agree respecting the conduct to be pursued, and parted with reproaches and threats. Raymond Roger, on retiring to his territories, set

about preparations for defence, while his uncle despatched deputies to Rouen, where the Pope then was, to make submission and obtain his forgiveness. He likewise solicited the protection of his cousin, the king of France ; who, learning that he had made a like application to the German emperor, refused him assistance.

The envoys sent by Raymond to the Pope were received with apparent indulgence. Innocent required that their master should make common cause with the crusaders, that he should assist them to exterminate the heretics, and give up seven of his strongest castles, as a pledge of his intentions ; on these conditions he gave him hopes, not merely of absolution, but of complete restoration to his favour. Innocent, however, was very far from having in his heart forgiven Raymond. At this very time he was writing to the bishops of Riez and Couserans, and the abbot of Citeaux : “ We advise you, with the apostle St. Paul, to employ deceit towards this count ; for, in this case, it must be called prudence. You must attack separately those who have separated themselves from the unity, and leave the count of Toulouse for a time, employing a wise dissimulation towards him, that the other heretics may be the more easily vanquished, and that we may then be able to crush him when he alone shall be left.” One cannot help remarking that, whenever these ambitious and perfidious churchmen had any disgraceful orders to communicate, they never failed to wrest some passage

or other of Scripture to their purpose: in fact, they seemed to have studied the Bible merely to make sacrilegious applications of it.

In the spring of the year 1209, all the fanatics collected by the monks of Citeaux for the holy war began to put themselves in motion. Indulgences for this crusade were at a discount: a campaign of forty days only, to which most vassals were bound by the tenure of their fiefs, was all that was required in exchange for eternal salvation. Among the near neighbours of the Albigenses, the Bernardins had contrived to draw after them nearly the whole male population. Some writers state the number of pilgrims or crusaders, who poured down upon Languedoc at three hundred thousand, others at five hundred thousand; while the abbot of Vaux Cernay, the historian of this war, represents them as amounting to no more than fifty thousand in this first campaign, and his is the most probable estimate. In this calculation, however, must not be included the ignorant and fanatic multitude, who, armed with scythes and clubs, followed every preacher, and hoped that, though they might not be able to cope with the knights of Languedoc, they should be equal to the slaughter of the wives and children of heretics. The abbot of Citeaux, papal legate and director-general of the crusade, collected at Lyons the main body of the combatants, who were vassals of the German emperor; the archbishop of Bordeaux had assembled in the Agenois another body composed of subjects of England; and

the bishop of Puy commanded a third in the Velay, consisting of subjects of the king of France.

When Raymond learned that those terrible bands of fanatics were in motion, and directing their course towards his territories, he lost no time in representing to the Pope that the legate who headed them was his personal enemy. "It would be unjust," said he, "to take advantage of my submission to put me into the power of a man who would listen only to the resentment which he entertains against me." To do away in appearance with this cause of complaint, Innocent appointed a new legate; this was Milo, his notary or secretary; but, so far from restraining the animosity of the abbot, it was Raymond alone whom he meant to deceive: for "he expressly told this new legate," says Peter de Vaux Cernay, "the abbot of Citeaux must do every thing, while thou in reality art only his organ; because the count of Toulouse suspects him, whereas of thee he has no suspicion."

Such was the alarm of that count on the nearer approach of the crusaders, that he submitted to purchase absolution from the legate on the most humiliating conditions. He delivered up to Milo seven of his strongest castles; he promised to abide by the judgment which the legate should pronounce upon fifteen different charges which the agents of the persecution had preferred against him; and lastly, he suffered himself to be taken on the 18th of June to the church of St. Gilles, with bare back

and a rope about his neck, and submitted to be scourged around the altar. After all these humiliations, he was permitted to take the cross against the heretics, and, as a sort of favour, he was allowed to join and act as guide to those who were marching to attack his nephew.

The principal army of the crusaders descended the Rhone, proceeding through Lyons and Valence to Avignon. Hither Raymond Roger repaired to meet the legate and endeavour to make his peace with him. The haughty churchman spurned his advances with disdain. The viscount, aware that he had no indulgence to expect, prepared for a vigorous defence. He summoned to him all his vassals, friends, and allies, told them the offers that he had made and how they had been received. Like him, they determined to defend themselves. Not that all those who took up arms with him were heretics; but, such was the impatience of the disorderly mass of the crusaders to spill blood in honour of the Church, and to act before any explanation was asked or given, that all the barons and knights, rather than run the risk of their blunders, shut themselves up in their castles, called in their peasants, and collected provisions in order to withstand a first attack. Some castles were deserted on the approach of the fanatics; others, which were not suspected to contain heretics, paid heavy contributions by way of ransom. Villemur was burned. Chasseneuil capitulated after an obstinate defence

on condition that the garrison should be permitted to retire with their most valuable effects ; but the inhabitants, being suspected of heresy, were left at the mercy of the legate. Men and women were thrown into the flames amidst the joyous shouts of their ferocious conquerors. All the property found in the castle was afterwards given up to plunder.

Raymond Roger had reckoned more particularly upon the defence of his two principal cities, Beziers and Carcassonne ; he had divided between them his bravest knights and the *routiers* who had attached themselves to his fortune. The first thing he did was to visit Beziers, to see that this strong place was provided with every thing, and to exhort the citizens to defend their lives manfully. He then shut himself up in Carcassonne, a town seated on a rock surrounded by the river Aude, and even the two suburbs of which were encompassed by walls and ditches.

The inhabitants of Beziers were intimidated, when they learned that their young viscount had quitted them for a place of greater safety ; their alarm increased, when they beheld the crusaders arriving and their three armies forming a junction under their walls about the middle of July, 1209. They had been preceded by the bishop of Beziers, who, after repairing to the legate, and giving him a list of such of his flock as he suspected of heresy and as he wished to see committed to the flames, returned to his parishioners, represented the dangers

which they would incur, and exhorted them to deliver up their heretical fellow-citizens to the avengers of the faith rather than draw down upon themselves, their wives, and their children, the wrath of Heaven and of the Church. "Tell the legate," replied the citizens, whom the bishop had assembled in the great church of St. Nicaise, "that our city is good and strong; that our liege-lord will not fail to succour us in our great necessity; and that, rather than be base enough to do what is required of us, we will eat our own children." Yet there was not one of them so bold, but his heart sunk within him when the pilgrims, as the bloodthirsty invaders were called, had encamped beneath their walls.

The citizens of Beziers, though alarmed, were not discouraged. While their enemies were still engaged in marking out their camp, they made a sortie and attacked them unawares; but the crusaders, compared with the inhabitants of the South, were more formidable for their fanaticism and their valour than for their number. The infantry alone sufficed to repulse the citizens with great loss. At this moment, all the battalions of the besiegers rushed upon them at once, and pursued them so closely that they entered the gates along with the fugitives, and found themselves in possession of the city, before they had thought of the means of attacking it. The knights, being informed that they had triumphed without a battle, consulted the legate as to what they ought to do in order to distinguish the heretics from the

catholics, and received this memorable reply: " Kill them all; the Lord will know his own."

The resident population of Beziers probably did not exceed fifteen thousand persons; but all the inhabitants of the surrounding country, of the open villages, and of the castles that were deemed incapable of defence, had taken refuge in that city which was considered as very strong; while most of those who had stayed to guard the fortified castles had conveyed their wives and children to Beziers. At the moment when the crusaders made themselves masters of the gates, this whole multitude fled to the churches; the spacious cathedral of St. Nicaise contained the greatest number; the canons, in their choral habits, surrounded the altar and rang the bells by way of expressing their supplications to the furious assailants; but their brazen tones were alike unheeded with those of human voices. The bells ceased not to sound till the last of that immense multitude which had taken refuge in the church was butchered. Neither were those spared who had sought a refuge in the other churches: in that of the Magdalen alone seven thousand corpses were counted. When the crusaders had slaughtered all, to the very last living creature, in Beziers, and had plundered the houses of every thing that appeared worth carrying away, they set fire to all the quarters at once: the city was but one vast conflagration; not an edifice remained standing, not a human being was left alive. Respecting the number of the victims ac-

counts differ: the legate, ashamed perhaps of the carnage which he had ordered, reduces it to fifteen thousand in his letter to the Pope: Bernard Itier, of Limoges, a contemporary, makes it amount to thirty-eight thousand, while other writers set it down at sixty thousand.

The massacre of Beziers struck such terror that all the fortresses in that part of the country were deserted: none of them appeared strong enough to hold out against an army which, in a single day, had taken and destroyed the capital. The inhabitants thought it better to flee to the woods and mountains than to wait for such enemies within a walled inclosure, which would serve them for a prison. As there was not a knight in all France whose residence was not fortified, the number of castles in the two dioceses of Beziers and Carcassonne was immense; but the crusaders found more than a hundred of them abandoned. Not yet sated with blood, they nevertheless advanced, and on the 1st of August arrived before Carcassonne.

The whole of that town was then seated on the right bank of the Aude; the young viscount had greatly augmented the fortifications, and he had a numerous garrison about him. On the following day, one of the suburbs was attacked, and taken after a battle of two hours. The assailants then proceeded to the attack of the other suburb, but were repelled with loss. For eight days, the besieged continued to defend it with success: at last, they evacuated and

set it on fire, before they abandoned it to their enemies and retired into the town.

King Philip II. of Aragon, whom the viscount of Beziers had acknowledged as his lord paramount, was deeply grieved at the oppression of that young prince, his nephew. He repaired to the camp of the crusaders, and addressed himself to his brother-in-law, the count of Toulouse, who was forced to accompany and to second the enemies of his country, to the duke of Burgundy, and to the legate, offering himself as mediator between Raymond Roger and them. Before he would talk about conditions, the legate, who wished to obtain some intelligence concerning the state of the besieged, prevailed upon the king to go himself into the town and to confer with his nephew. The viscount, after warmly thanking him, promised to abide by any agreement that he should make for him; "for," said he, "I see clearly that we cannot hold out long in this town, on account of the great number of country people, men, women, and children, who have taken refuge here: we cannot count them, and they are dying daily in flocks. But, if there were only myself and my men, I swear that I would rather die of hunger than surrender to the legate."

When the king had reported this speech to the legate, the latter could judge better what sort of propositions he ought to make to a generous man, with the certainty that they would not be accepted; for he durst not absolutely reject such a mediator as

the king of Aragon, and yet he had no wish for a peace which would have suspended the massacres. He, therefore, sent word to the viscount, that the only condition he could grant was liberty for himself and twelve others to retire from the city, leaving all the rest of the citizens and soldiers to his good pleasure. "Rather than do what the legate proposes," replied the high-spirited viscount, "I will submit to be flayed alive; he shall not have the very meanest of my company in his power, since it is for me that they are all in this danger." The king approved the generous resolution of his nephew; and, turning to the knights and the citizens of Carcassonne, to whom these conditions had been communicated, he said, "You now know what you have to expect; be sure and defend yourselves stoutly, for he who defends himself is always treated the better in the end."

No sooner had the king of Aragon left the town than the crusaders made an assault upon the walls; they attempted to fill the ditches with faggots, which they brought for the purpose, encouraging one another by loud cries; but, when they approached the walls, the besieged poured upon them torrents of boiling water or oil, at the same time showering stones and projectiles of all sorts, so that they were forced to fall back. The attack was long and several times renewed; but the assailants were finally obliged to retire with great loss.

The time was drawing nigh when most of the cru-

saders would have completed their forty days' service: they had calculated upon a miracle in their favour, and they had already been repulsed in two assaults. The legate perceived symptoms of discouragement in his army; he therefore commissioned a gentleman, a relative of the viscount's, to enter the town and to renew the negociations. Raymond Roger, on his part, was extremely desirous of an honourable capitulation; he found that, owing to the extreme heat of the season, the water in the cisterns of the city was beginning to fail. Deeply impressed with the righteousness of his cause, he felt assured that, as soon as the injustice of which he was the victim should be known, it would excite the commiseration of the great nobles and churchmen whom religious zeal alone had armed against him. He persuaded himself that, if he could but obtain a hearing, all difficulties would be removed, and merely desired a safe-conduct to the camp of the crusaders. The legate and the lords of the army gave the most complete assurance of his safety and liberty, and confirmed the promise with oaths. The viscount accordingly left the town with an escort of three hundred knights, and repaired to the tent of the legate, where all the principal lords of the army were assembled. He concluded a noble and energetic defence of his conduct by declaring that he submitted, as he always had done, to the orders of the Church, and that he awaited the decision of the council.

The legate was thoroughly imbued with the maxim of his master, that "to keep faith with those who

have no faith is to break faith." He ordered the viscount and all the knights who accompanied him to be seized, and committed him to the custody of Simon Montfort, earl of Leicester, one of the principal leaders of the crusaders. He expected by this treachery to strike terror into the inhabitants of Carcassonne; but that very terror served to deprive him of the victims whom he had destined to the flames. The citizens were acquainted with a secret outlet for escaping from the city; it was a subterraneous passage, three leagues in length, running from Carcassonne to the towers of Cubardès. Through this passage the inhabitants fled in the night, abandoning all their effects to the rapacity of their foes. Next morning, the besiegers were astonished at not seeing a creature upon the walls, but it was some time before they ascertained that the place was deserted. They then entered; and the legate took possession of the booty in the name of the Church, excommunicating such of the crusaders as would have helped themselves to the smallest portion of it. At the same time, conceiving that it would be derogatory to the honour of the Church if it were known that the heretics had escaped him, he reported that the inhabitants had left the place by virtue of a capitulation which he had signed with them. His scouts had picked up a number of persons about the country; a few of the fugitives of Carcassonne had been overtaken and brought to the camp; lastly, he had in his hands the three hundred knights who had accompanied the viscount. Out of all these he selected four hun-

dred and fifty men and women liable to the suspicion of heresy ; four hundred he caused to be burned alive, and the other fifty to be hanged.*

The principal object of the crusade was accomplished. The count of Toulouse, who had been accused of favouring the heretics, had submitted to the deepest humiliations to make his peace. The viscount of Narbonne, to prevent the visit of the crusaders, had published laws against the heretics, surpassing in severity the demands of the Church themselves. The viscount of Beziers was a prisoner : his two strongest towns were destroyed, and most of his castles contained not a single inhabitant. The French nobles who had joined the crusade, to earn the pardons of the Church, began to feel some shame on account of all the blood they had spilt, and the forfeiture of their word ; while the knights and the soldiers, having completed the time of their service, insisted on returning home. The legate, however, conceived that he had not yet done enough. The sectarians were stricken with terror : they concealed themselves ; they might possibly keep silence long after the departure of the crusaders ; but they were not destroyed : their opinions would circulate in secret ; resentment for the outrages already suffered would

* Sismondi remarks in a note that the accounts of the taking of Carcassonne given by the ancient historians differ so much that one would scarcely suppose them to relate to the event. He professes to have followed the *Histoire des grands faicts d'armes de Toulouse*, written in the Provençal dialect.

alienate them still more from the Church, and the reformation would break out afresh. To throw back civilization, to obliterate all traces of a great advance of the human mind, it is not sufficient to sacrifice a few thousands by way of example; the whole nation must be slaughtered, excepting those drudges whose intellect raises them very little above the cattle which assist them in their toil. The legate had a right notion of the means likely to lead to the end which he proposed.

He summoned a council of the crusaders, to dispose of the conquests which had been made. He first offered the viscounties of Beziers and Carcassonne to the duke of Burgundy, who refused the gift, saying that "he had plenty of lands and lordships, without robbing the said viscount; and he really thought they had done him harm enough without despoiling him of his inheritance."

This noble refusal piqued the honour of the other great nobles: the counts of Nevers and of St. Paul, to whom the legate made the same offers, treated them with the like disdain. The conquered territories were then offered to Simon de Montfort, the head of a noble house, which is traced by some to a natural son of king Robert's, and who had derived from his mother, an English lady, the earldom of Leicester. A brave and skilful soldier, Montfort had distinguished himself in the fourth crusade, from which he had recently returned. Cruel, perfidious, and a fanatic in religion, he was moreover too ambitious to

refuse the opportunity of raising himself to the rank of the great feudatories. He imposed on his new territories a yearly tax payable to the court of Rome, and issued rigorous ordinances against such of his subjects as should not earnestly strive to relieve themselves from the excommunication.

The departure of the counts of Nevers and Toulouse, and soon afterwards of the duke of Burgundy, having left him to prosecute the war with his own forces alone, he directed his arms against the count of Foix, who possessed the greater part of the Albigeois, which was regarded as the principal seat of the new doctrines. In the first terror excited by the massacre of Beziers, the count had retired into the most inaccessible part of his territories, while the catholic clergy in the principal towns rallied round Montfort, who entered Pamiers and Albi without resistance. The count proposed terms of peace; they were accepted by Montfort, who found his force daily diminishing, and, towards the end of 1209, hostilities were suspended in that quarter.

Meanwhile, Raymond Roger was detained a prisoner by the new possessor of his states. Even in the minds of his enemies, pity for the fate of this prince had succeeded to fury. He was still beloved by his subjects and his neighbours, and his relative and liege-lord the king of Aragon might espouse his cause. Montfort gave the necessary directions that his captive should die of dysentery in a tower of the palace at Carcassonne, where he was closely confined.

He then took care to exhibit his body to his subjects, and to give him an honourable funeral. The public voice attributed his decease to poison, and the Pope himself, in one of his letters, acknowledged that he perished by a violent death.

Those who had participated in the campaign against the Albigenses regarded their object as completely attained and the war as terminated. Desolation had been spread over the face of that country where the reformation had commenced; two large towns were destroyed; thousands of victims had perished by the sword, while thousands more, driven from their blazing homes, were wandering in the woods and mountains, and daily perishing of want. The ruin of so fair a country, and the contrast between its former opulence and its present desolation, would soon have caused the fury of war to give place to pity, if any other motive than religious fanaticism had armed the crusaders.

After the conquest of the suspected countries had been accomplished, after peace had been granted to the princes and a safeguard to the submissive people, the monks of Citeaux still continued to preach a war of extermination, because they had done so with success in the preceding year, and were unwilling to relinquish the honours and profits of their mission. Fresh shoals of fanatics were thus impelled every year upon these miserable provinces, and they obliged their leaders to recommence the war, in compliance with the exhortations of those who still demanded

human victims, and required blood to effect their salvation.

Montfort, being reinforced by a new host of crusaders, and coveting the possessions of the count of Toulouse, caused that ill-fated prince to be excommunicated by the two legates, and his territories laid under an interdict, after which he began hostilities against him. By his contrivance, the abbot of Eaulnes, who had negotiated the peace between him and the count of Foix, was assassinated : he then accused the count of this crime, and declared the treaty with him to be at an end. On the other hand, the king of Aragon refused to accept his allegiance, or to acknowledge any other than the infant son of the late viscount as his successor, and called upon the knights in the territories of Beziers and Carcassonne to arm in support of his rights. So general was the defection in consequence of this appeal, that, by the end of the year, out of more than two hundred towns and castles, not more than eight remained under Montfort's domination.

The count of Toulouse, in his solicitude to reconcile himself with the Church, proceeded early in 1210 to Rome, prepared to make great concessions to the Pope, in order to obtain his absolution. Innocent, whether from real good-will or duplicity, gave him a gracious reception, released him provisionally from the excommunication pronounced against him, but referred him for final absolution to a council which should assemble in the province three months after

his return. The object of this council was to decide whether Raymond was or was not guilty of heresy, and whether he had or had not instigated the murder of Castelnau.

Before the meeting of this council, the Pope sent Master Theodise, a canon of Genoa, to advise with the legate. "He was," says Peter de Vaux Cernay, "a circumspect man, prudent, and very zealous for the affairs of God; and he desired, above all things, to find some pretext of right to refuse the count that opportunity of justifying himself which Innocent had granted him." Men of this stamp could not long be at a loss for such a pretext; whereupon the council, which met in September at St. Gilles, alleging that he had not obeyed the orders of the Church in some minor matters, refused to hear his defence on the two capital charges. At this unexpected decision, the count burst into tears. "How great soever be the overflow of waters," said Master Theodise, quoting Scripture in derision of his weakness, "they will not reach unto God;" and in the name of the Church he fulminated a new excommunication against him.

The monks of Citeaux were meanwhile busily engaged in raising a fresh army of crusaders in the north of France; and no sooner was Montfort joined by them than he gave full scope to his cruelty. Attacking the castles in the Lauraguais and Menerbois, he caused all such of their inhabitants as fell into his hands to be hanged on gibbets. Having invested that of Brom, and taken it by assault on the third day, he

selected more than a hundred of the wretched inhabitants, and, having torn out their eyes and cut off their noses, sent them, under the guidance of a one-eyed man, to the castle of Cabaret, to intimate to the garrison of that fortress the fate which awaited them. Some of these fortresses he found deserted, and then sent out his soldiers to destroy the vines and the olive-trees in the surrounding country.

The castle of Menerbe, seated on a steep rock surrounded by precipices, not far from Narbonne, was reputed to be the strongest place in the South of France. Guiraud, its possessor, was vassal to the viscounts of Carcassonne, and one of the bravest knights in the province. In the month of June, 1210, the crusaders appeared before this fortress. The inhabitants, many of whom had adopted the doctrines of the Albigenses, defended themselves with great valour for seven weeks: but when, owing to the heat of the season, water began to fail, they desired to capitulate; and Guiraud himself went to the camp of the crusaders and settled with Montfort the conditions for the surrender of the place. They were proceeding to execute them, when the legate, who had been absent, returned to the camp, and Montfort declared that the terms agreed upon could not be considered as binding till they had received his assent. "At these words," says Peter de Vaux-Cernay, "the abbot was sorely grieved. He desired, in fact, that all the enemies of Christ should be put to death, but he would not take it upon himself to condemn them,

on account of his quality of monk and priest." He thought, however, that he might stir up some quarrel during the negociation, avail himself of it to break the capitulation, and cause all the inhabitants to be put to the sword. To this end he required Montfort, on one part, and Guiraud on the other, to commit to writing, without communicating with one another, the terms on which they had agreed. Finding, as he expected, some difference in the statements, Montfort declared, in the name of the legate, that the negociation was broken off. The lord of Menerbe offered to accept the capitulation as drawn up by Montfort, one of the articles of which provided that heretics themselves, if they became converts, should have their lives spared, and be allowed to quit the castle.

When the capitulation was read in the council of war, "Robert de Mauvoisin," says the monk of Vaux-Cernay, "a nobleman, and entirely devoted to the Catholic faith, cried that the pilgrims would never consent to that; that it was not to show mercy to the heretics, but to put them to death, that they had taken the cross; but abbot Arnold replied: 'Be easy, for I believe there will be very few converted.'" In this sanguinary hope the legate was not disappointed.

The crusaders took possession of the castle on the 22d of July: they entered, singing *Te Deum*, and preceded by the crucifix and the standards of Montfort. The heretics were meanwhile assembled, the men in one house, the women in another, and there,

on their knees, and resigned to their fate, they prepared themselves by prayer for the worst that could befall them. The abbot of Vaux-Cernay, in fulfilment of the capitulation, began to preach to them the Catholic faith; but they interrupted him with the unanimous cry: "We will have none of your faith; we have renounced the Church of Rome; your labour is in vain; for neither death nor life shall make us renounce the opinions we have embraced." The abbot then went to the assembly of women, but he found them equally resolute, and still more enthusiastic in their declarations. Montfort also went to them both. He had previously caused a prodigious pile of dry wood to be made. "Be converted to the Catholic faith," said he, to the assembled Albigenses, "or mount this pile." None of them wavered. Fire was set to the wood, and the pile was soon wrapt in one tremendous blaze. The heretics were then taken to the spot, where, after commending their souls to that God in whose cause they suffered martyrdom, they voluntarily threw themselves into the flames, to the number of more than one hundred and forty.

The capture of Menerbe was speedily followed by the siege of the very strong castle of Termes, which made an obstinate resistance of four months, till the garrison, thinned by disease, attempted to escape by abandoning the place, with the hope of reaching Catalonia. As soon as their flight was perceived, the whole army of the crusaders went in pursuit of the fugitives, most of whom were killed on the spot; the

others were conducted alive to Montfort. Among the latter was Raymond, lord of Termes, who had made such a valiant defence: his life he spared, and, instead of burning him, confined him in the dungeon of a tower of Carcassonne, where he languished for many years.

When Montfort took the field in 1211, his first efforts were directed to the reduction of numerous castles situated among the mountains between the dioceses of Carcassonne and Toulouse. The crusaders then advanced to Lavaur, a strong castle, about five leagues from the latter city. It belonged to a widow named Guiraude, who had been joined by her brother Aimery de Montreal, with eighty knights, after he had been despoiled of his own possessions by the crusaders. Professing themselves the doctrines of the Albigenses, they had afforded an asylum within their walls to such of the Reformed as were persecuted in the other parts of the province; so that their fortress, which was well stored with provisions, and surrounded with strong walls and deep ditches, was considered as one of the principal seats of heresy. Fouquet, the Catholic bishop of Toulouse, a bloodthirsty fanatic, represented to the inhabitants of this city that their mixture with heretics rendered them a horror to all Christians, and that they ought to arm against such of their fellow-citizens as had abandoned the Catholic faith, lest they should be confounded with the latter. He persuaded them to form a society called the White Company, which engaged to destroy the heretics by

fire and sword ; and, having thus inflamed their zeal, he sent five thousand of these fanatics to assist in the siege of Lavaur.

Montfort was not only a daring and skilful general, but a proficient in every branch of the military science of his age. Many of the knights in his army also had acquired in the East considerable experience in the attack and defence of fortified places. To overthrow walls, he employed ingenious machines, but recently introduced into Europe, and as yet unknown in the countries bordering on the Pyrenees. The most formidable of these was a strong wooden tower, covered with sheepskins, with the wool outwards to protect it from fire. Being moved on wooden rollers to the foot of the wall, the side of this machine opened, and an immense beam, armed with iron hooks, thrust forward like the paw of a cat, shook the wall by repeated strokes, after the manner of the ancient battering ram, and tore out and pulled down the stones which it had loosened. Montfort had constructed an engine of this kind, but the wide ditches of Lavaur prevented it from approaching near enough to the walls. The crusaders laboured hard to fill up the ditch ; but the inhabitants of Lavaur, having subterranean passages to it, cleared away in the night all that had been thrown in during the day. At length, Montfort contrived to fill the mines with flame and smoke, and thus prevented the besieged from passing through them. The ditches were then speedily filled ; the cat was pushed

to the foot of the wall; and its terrible paw began to make and enlarge a breach.

As soon as the breach was practicable, the crusaders prepared for the assault. The bishops, the vice-legatè, and the priests, in their pontifical habits, exulting in the expected carnage, sang the *Veni Creator*. The knights mounted the breach. Resistance was out of the question, and Montfort's only care was to prevent his followers from falling instantly upon the inhabitants, and to beseech them rather to make prisoners, that the priests of the living God might not be deprived of their promised gratification. "Very soon," proceeds the monk of Vaux-Cernay, "they dragged out of the castle Aimery, lord of Montreal, and other knights, to the number of eighty. The noble count [Montfort] immediately ordered them to be hanged upon the gallows; but, as soon as Aimery, the stoutest of them, was hung up, the gallows fell; for, in their great haste, it had not been properly fixed in the ground. The count, seeing that this would produce great delay, ordered the rest to be slaughtered; and the pilgrims, eager to execute the order, presently put all of them to death upon the spot. The lady of the castle, who was Aimery's sister and an execrable heretic, was by the count's order thrown into a pit, which was filled up with stones; afterwards our pilgrims collected the innumerable heretics that the castle contained, and burned them alive with the utmost joy."

These worthy soldiers of an inhuman Church now

advanced into the territories of the count of Toulouse, and, the castle of Cassero having surrendered on capitulation, "the pilgrims, seizing nearly sixty heretics, burned them with infinite joy." Such is the phrase always employed by the monk, who was an eyewitness and the panegyrist of the crusade. Many other castles being either surrendered or abandoned, Montfort proceeded to lay siege to Toulouse. Though many of the inhabitants of that city had embraced the doctrines of the Albigenses, the greater number were still Papists ; but the magistrates had the firmness to refuse either to renounce their allegiance to their count, though he had been excommunicated, or to deliver up to punishment such of their fellow-citizens as were suspected of inclining to the new opinions. On the other hand, the White Company, formed by the bishop, erected by its own authority a tribunal for the trial of suspected heretics, and executed its judgments by open force, in the destruction and pillage of their houses. A counter-association was soon formed by the name of the Black Company, and frequent hostile encounters between the two parties ensued. " Thus," says Master William of Puy-Laurens, a contemporary historian, " did our Lord, by the ministry of his servant the bishop, instead of a bad peace, excite among them a good war." In spite, however, of the efforts of this worthy servant of the Lord, count Raymond laboured so successfully in rousing his subjects to a sense of their common danger and interest, that he effected a reconciliation

between the two companies, on which the legate excommunicated all the inhabitants of the city. These, nevertheless, defended themselves against the crusaders with such spirit that Montfort was obliged to raise the siege.

After this check, the affairs of the ferocious Montfort continued to decline ; while Raymond, with the assistance of the counts of Foix and Cominges, reconquered all the strong places in the Albigeois. During the following winter, the zeal of the monks of Citeaux was exerted with such effect, that Montfort again found himself at the head of a formidable force. Many of the fanatical bands which composed it were led by high dignitaries of the Church ; and so great was the eagerness to assist in the slaughter of heretics, that the army of the crusaders was renewed four times in the course of the year 1212. They were obliged, however, to be content with such straggling peasants as they could pick up in the fields, or prisoners taken in the castles that dared to resist them. Their sanguinary commander, finding that the greater part of the population of the countries in which heresy had prevailed, was exterminated, and that the remainder had got out of his reach, resolved to take advantage of the zeal of his fanatical followers, by leading them into the Agenois, and making them earn their indulgences there, though the entire population was Catholic. The siege of Boissac was remarkable for a piece of perfidious cruelty, which the execrable Montfort compelled the inhabitants to practise. He

refused to spare their lives unless they would engage to slaughter with their own hands three hundred *routiers*, who formed the garrison and had till then valiantly defended the place; and the crusaders, contenting themselves with this carnage, only demanded from the townspeople a sum of money to save their houses from the flames. Montfort then led his army into the counties of Foix and Cominges, which he ravaged; while the count of Toulouse, stripped of almost all his territories, went to Aragon, to solicit the intercession of the king, his brother-in-law, with the court of Rome.

It is irrevelant to my purpose to detail the military operations which succeeded, till the council of Lateran in 1215 put an end to the preaching of the crusade against the Albigenses, and disposed of the countries conquered by the crusaders. The counts of Toulouse, Foix, and Cominges repaired to Rome to plead their cause before the assembled Church, and exposed the crying injustice which Montfort had committed against them, in contempt of the pontifical authority itself. Many of the members of the council defended these persecuted princes; they spoke with execration of the horrors committed in the province, and reproached Fouquet, bishop of Toulouse, with having destroyed more than ten thousand of the flock committed to his care. The Pope himself appeared touched, but the majority of the assembly, heated by the fanaticism of the crusade, at length triumphed, and obtained a decree, giving to

Montfort all the territories of the count of Toulouse, excepting the county of Venaissin and the marquissate of Provence, which were reserved for his son Raymond VII. The final decision respecting the counties of Foix and Cominges was deferred, but they were provisionally restored to their rightful possessors.

Thus the first reformation was totally extinguished. So prodigious had been the slaughter, and so profound was the terror, that the Church appeared to have completely attained her object. The worship of the reformed Albigenses had every where ceased. Almost all the teachers of the new church had died a fearful death; while the small number who had escaped from the crusaders had sought refuge in the most distant countries, and had no chance of avoiding new persecutions but by observing absolute silence respecting their doctrines and their sufferings. Individuals who had not perished by fire or the sword, and who had not withdrawn by flight from the scrutiny of the Inquisition, knew that they could save their lives only by burying their secret in their own bosoms: their very children were not made acquainted with their private sentiments.

But, if the church of the Albigenses was drowned in blood, other parts of the population of Southern France were doomed to martyrdom under their name. The crusaders, in their blind fury, slaughtered all the inhabitants of hundreds of villages, without taking

the trouble to inquire whether they contained a single heretic. We know not what credit ought to be given to the numbers assigned to the armies of the cross, or whether, in any single year, one hundred thousand men were poured into Languedoc; but certain it is that armies far superior in number, far inferior in discipline, to those employed in other wars, had, for seven or eight successive years, inundated this desolated country almost without interruption. They had neither pay nor magazines, living at the expense of the country, and supplying all their wants by means of the sword. In short, no calculation can ascertain with any precision the waste of property and the destruction of human life, which were the consequences of the crusade against the Albigenses.

Though the so-called heretics were crushed, the blessings of peace were not restored to the ravaged and desolated provinces which had been drenched with their blood. The ambitious Montfort, not content with the possessions of the count of Toulouse, continued hostilities against the counts of Cominges and Foix. The king of Aragon, who had thus far been the mediator of peace or acted with the crusaders, either because he could not suffer the count of Toulouse, who was his brother-in-law, to be robbed of his dominions, or deeming himself bound to prevent the oppression of the count de Foix, who was his vassal, or, perhaps, dissatisfied that he had been forgotten in the intended division of the spoils of those two

princes, now unexpectedly declared for them, and abandoned Montfort. In a very short time, the king and the two counts raised an army of 100,000 men, composed of Aragonese and natives of Languedoc and Provence. Confident in their strength, they marched to meet Montfort, and offered him battle. The combatants on both sides fought with all the animosity that religion added to interest could not fail to excite; but, the king of Aragon being slain in the heat of the fray, his allies were struck with consternation; and Montfort, taking advantage of their panic, attacked them on all sides with such vigour that they were put to the rout, leaving, it is said, 20,000 slain on the field.

After this signal victory, Montfort marched for Toulouse, which surrendered at discretion, and Narbonne followed its example. During the following years, success attended the arms of the conqueror; but at length, in 1418, by a change of fortune, count Raymond retook Toulouse. Montfort, at the head of 100,000 crusaders, immediately laid siege to the city; but his army was defeated, and himself killed by a stone hurled from the ramparts.

The death of their cruel but valiant leader threatened the affairs of the Catholics with irretrievable ruin. The counts of Toulouse, Foix, and Cominges, recovered in a short time all that had been taken from them; and they retained these advantages till the death of count Raymond once more changed the aspect of affairs. That prince was an object of popish

persecution as long as he lived. He was nevertheless most scrupulous in the observance of all the practices of the Catholic religion ; so that, when under excommunication, he would continue for a long time on his knees in prayer at the doors of the churches, which he durst not enter. Neither did that persecution terminate with his life. After his death, in August, 1222, his son could not obtain authority to bury his body. It was therefore deposited in a coffin near the cemetery of St. John, at Toulouse, awaiting the permission of the Church for its interment. There it still lay in the fourteenth century ; but, as it was only of wood, and no care was taken for its preservation, it fell to pieces, and the bones of the unfortunate prince were dispersed before the sixteenth century.

His son, young Raymond, who succeeded him, continuing the war with forces unequal to those of his enemies, experienced such ill success that he was obliged to surrender. He was sent prisoner to Pavia. To regain his liberty, he agreed to such terms as his enemies chose to exact, and, among others, to issue the severest edicts against the Albigenses.

On the other hand, the counts of Foix and Cominges, finding themselves too weak to withstand so many enemies as were continually falling upon them, made their peace upon the best conditions that they could obtain.

The open war against the Albigenses was followed by that of the Inquisition, which completely de-

stroyed the remnant of those unfortunate people. The provinces first given by the Church to Simon Montfort were subsequently transferred by the same authority to Louis VIII. They comprised nearly the whole of the fine provinces of Provence, Dauphiné, and Languedoc, with the exception of that portion which Raymond VII. was permitted to retain, and which was not finally added to the possessions of the crown of France till the death of his daughter in 1271.

I cannot quit this subject without calling the attention of the reader to the excellent observations made upon it by an anonymous writer, prefixed in an Introductory Essay to his translation of that part of Sismondi's History of France which relates to the persecution of the Albigenses, published in 1826.

"The crusades against the Albigenses," says this writer, "present one of those occasions by which the rights claimed by the Romish Church towards heretics may be most fully and accurately ascertained. They were her exclusive and deliberate act. The Church of Rome had been then, according to its own principles, established for nearly 1200 years. It professed to have been endowed with miraculous powers, and to be guided by the teachings of the infallible spirit of God. All the temporal authorities had submitted to its domination, and were ready to execute its orders. If, therefore, there is any period in which we should seek for its genuine and authentic principles, it must be under the un-

clouded dominion of Innocent III. Nor can the opponents of all reformation possibly desire any thing more than to restore that golden age of the Church. Should they say that, civilization and philosophy having then made but small progress, we are to charge the cruelties which were committed against the heretics to the ignorance and barbarism of the times, we would reply that all these cruelties were prompted, encouraged, and sanctioned by Rome itself, and that an infallible Church cannot require the lights of philosophy to instruct her in her duties towards heretics. To an impartial inquirer, it would seem rather strange that, under the spiritual illumination afforded by this Church to the nations, heresies should have arisen, and that, with all the powers of Heaven and earth on its side, the Church could not trust itself in the field of reason and argument against them. But certain it is that heresies did arise, and that the Church of Rome felt itself called upon to show to that age and to all succeeding ones the full extent of the power with which it was invested by Heaven for their suppression and extirpation.

“The dogma on which all these transactions were founded is — that the Church possesses the right to extirpate heresy, and to use all the means which she may judge necessary for that purpose. It was on this dogma that Innocent III. and his legates preached the crusade against the heretics, and promised to those engaged in it the full remission of all sins; it was on this dogma that they excommunicated the

civil powers by whom they were, or were supposed to be protected, and disposed of their dominions to those who assisted in this spiritual warfare. This dogma was repeatedly avowed by provincial councils, and finally ratified by a general council, the fourth of Lateran.* It was received by the tacit, nay, by the cordial and triumphant assent of the universal Church, and had also the sanction of the civil authorities, who received from the Church the spoils of the deposed and persecuted princes. We can, therefore, conceive of nothing which should be still necessary to constitute this dogma an article of faith, and hold ourselves justified in considering the Church of Rome to claim, as of divine authority, the right to extirpate heresy, and, for the purpose, if she judge it necessary, to extirpate heretics.

“Nor has this principle, which was evidently

* This council not only determined the spiritual power of the Church over heretics, but deferred the application of that power to temporal princes. Cap. iii, “Si dominus temporalis requisitus et monitus ab Ecclesia, terram suam purgare neglexerit ab hæretica fœditate, per Metropolitanos et cæteros Episcopos vinculo excommunicationis innodetur; et si satisfacere contempserit infra annum, significetur hoc Summo Pontifici, et extunc ipse vassalos ab ejus fidelitate denunciaret absolutos, et terram exponet Catholicis occupandam qui eam, hæreticis exterminatis, sine ulla contradictione possideant, salvo jure Domini principalis, dummodo super hoc ipse nullum præstet obstaculum, eadem nihilominus lege servata, circa eos qui non habent Dominos principales.”—See Delahogue, *Tract. de Ecclesia Christi*, p. 202. The author adds, “Nonnulli critici dubitant de authenticitate hujus canonis.” The count of Toulouse and the Albigenes, however, *felt* its authenticity.

avowed and acted upon at the period of these crusades, been ever renounced by any authentic or official act of that Church: on the contrary, the Church has, during the 600 years which followed these events, invariably, as far as occasions have served, avowed the same principles, and perpetrated or stimulated the same deeds. As soon as the wars against the Albigenses were terminated, the Inquisition was brought into full and constant action, and has always been encouraged and supported by the Romish Church to the utmost of its power in every place where it could obtain an establishment. The civil authorities, finding by experience that some of the claims of the Church were more prejudicial than useful to themselves, have denied to it the right of deposing sovereigns and of freeing subjects from their allegiance; but the Church itself has never generally and explicitly renounced this claim, and long after the Reformation in Germany continued to exercise it. And, notwithstanding the professions made by modern Catholics, history does not furnish an instance of any body of that profession interposing its protest against the persecution of heretics by the Church of Rome.

“ One of the rights the most constantly claimed and exercised by the Roman See throughout its whole history is that of dissolving oaths. History (Sismondi's *Hist. of the Italian Republics*) furnishes instances of this as a recognized, undisputed, and every-day practice in almost every pontificate. One

instance may serve for an illustration among a multitude of others. There were certain reforms in the pontifical government, which were required by the leading persons in the Church, but which they never could obtain from the Popes themselves. The cardinals, therefore, when they were going to elect a new Pope, were accustomed to bind themselves by the most solemn oaths that whoever of them should be elected would grant those reforms. And, invariably, as soon as the Pope was chosen, he released himself from his oath, on the ground of its being contrary to the interests of the Church. The power of releasing from the obligation of oaths was also extended during these crusades, especially to freeing the subjects of heretical princes from their oaths of allegiance, and it was especially sanctioned by the fourth council of Lateran. This practice has, however, become so obnoxious in modern times that the right has been indignantly disowned by most of the advocates of the Roman Catholic Church. Whatever may be the opinions of the English and Irish Catholics and those of many other private bodies in the Church of Rome, we doubt their authority to make such declarations, as members of a church which prohibits the right of private judgment where the Church has determined. All we apprehend is that, should it ever be within the power of the Roman Church and consistent with her policy to proceed against the English and Irish heretics, the declarations of the respectable bodies we have mentioned,

and even the authority of the most eminent individuals, would not shield us from the fate of the Albigenses in the thirteenth century.

“ In practice we are doubtless secure from such a revolution ; but to what are we indebted for this security ?—to any change in the principles of the Church of Rome since the time of the crusades against heretics ; or to our own power and the progress of public opinion ? If to the former, it belongs to the Catholics to show us this magna charta of our rights and immunities. If to the latter, we are then obliged to tell them that we hold our liberties only by the tenure of our power to maintain them ; and that every concession made to that Church is a voluntary manifestation of our sense of security arising from our own efforts against any future attempts at persecution.

“ No tale of falsehood can be so artfully framed as not to contain within itself its own confutation. This is manifestly the case with the stories fabricated respecting the Albigenses. The Catholics had persecuted and destroyed them ; they had also destroyed all their documents, and rendered it utterly impossible for them to speak in their own defence. They had excommunicated and dethroned the rulers, under whose government they had enjoyed protection, freedom, and happiness ; but, though they had done all this, they could not give a consistent justification of their proceedings. The Albigenses were, they say, the most detestable of heretics, licentious, and seditious : they propagated their execrable tenets by fire

and sword, rapine and plunder; they burned the crosses, destroyed the altars and churches, and desecrated the latter by converting them into brothels. Yet their lawful sovereigns, the counts of Toulouse, of Foix, and Cominges, and the viscount of Bearne, against whom all these deeds of sedition and violence must have been committed, are represented as not only enduring, but protecting such miscreants; and when the Roman Church, in its great goodness, offered to purge the land of these pollutions, they became such advocates of plunder, rapine, fire, sword, blasphemy, and sedition, as not only to make common cause with their subjects, but to endure in their defence every calamity which their enemies could inflict.

“Supposing, however, that the Albigenses had been all that the Catholic writers represent, upon what ground could the Roman Church make a war of extermination against them? The sovereigns of those countries did not seek her aid to suppress the seditions of their subjects, nor even to regulate their faith. The interference was not only without the authority, but absolutely against their consent, and was resisted by them in a war of twenty years’ continuance. If they refer to the authority of the king of France, as liege lord, he had not in that capacity the right of interference with the internal affairs of his feudatories; and he had, in fact, no share in these transactions, any further than to come in at the close of the contest and reap the fruits

of the victory. We are, therefore, from every point brought to the same conclusion:—that the Church claims a divine right to extirpate heresy and exterminate heretics, with or without the consent of the sovereigns in whose dominions they may be found.”

III. THE PERMANENT PERSECUTION OF THE INQUISITION.

The Inquisition, the most formidable of all the formidable engines devised by Popery to subdue the souls and bodies, the reason and the consciences, of men to its sovereign will, was a capital contrivance for rendering persecution permanent, as the Jacobins of recent times did the guillotine. Indeed, the one was only a slower process than the other for arriving at the same end.

The immediate motive for its establishment was, as we have seen, the suppression of the alleged heresy of the Albigenses, whom the Church, in her maternal anxiety for their eternal salvation, undertook, in spite of their natural sovereigns, to reclaim or—to exterminate. Innocent III., the then dispenser of her tender mercies, considering that, whatever might be done against the Albigenses by open force, there would still be left a great number who would persist in their sentiments and in the profession of their doctrines, conceived the plan of a permanent tribunal for the detection and punishment of heretics.

To this end it was requisite that the persons com-

posing it should be entirely dependent on the court of Rome, and absolutely devoted to its interests. It was requisite that they should have no other duties to divert their attention ; that they should be of low condition, in order that they might feel themselves honoured by an employment which consisted at first in the mere search after heretics. It was requisite that they should be without family ties and connections, so as to have no consideration for any person whatever ; that they should be obdurate, inflexible, without pity and without compassion ; because the intended tribunal was to exceed in severity any that had ever existed. Lastly, it was requisite that they should be zealous in behalf of religion, men of little or no ability, but interested, from particular motives, in the destruction of heretics.

Innocent, who was not satisfied with the bishops and their officials, whose zeal against heretics was, in his opinion, not sufficiently active, thought that in the monks of the recently established orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis were to be found all the qualities just enumerated.

For the court of Rome they had the strongest possible attachment. The solitude and retirement of which they made profession, but of which, as it appeared in the sequel, they soon began to tire, afforded them leisure to attend incessantly to this new calling. The meanness of their dress, the poverty of their monasteries, and, above all, the public mendicity and humility to which they bound

themselves, could not fail to make them regard the office of Inquisitors as one that flattered any relic of natural ambition which might yet lurk within their minds. The general renunciation which they made even of the names of the families from which they sprung, must go a great way towards stifling those sentiments which the ties of kindred and civil connections generally inspire. Besides, the austerity of their rules, and the severity which they were continually practising towards themselves, were not likely to allow them to have much feeling for others. Lastly, they were zealous, as possessors of newly established religions most commonly are; and learned, after the fashion of the times; that is to say, well versed in scholastic quibbles and in the new canon law. Moreover, they had a particular interest in the suppression of heretics, who were incessantly declaiming against them, and spared no pains to discredit them in the minds of the people.

On these monks, therefore, the Pope conferred the office of Inquisitors of the Faith, and they acquitted themselves in such a manner as not to disappoint his expectations. At first, however, their duty was limited to labouring for the conversion of heretics by means of preaching and instruction; to exhorting princes and magistrates to punish those who persisted in their errors; to inquiring the number and quality of the heretics, and also what degree of zeal and diligence was shown by Catholic princes, magistrates, and bishops, in searching out and inflicting punish-

ment. Their reports on these points were transmitted to the Pope, to be used as he should think fit; and from these inquiries the persons who were engaged in them received the name of Inquisitors.

Some time afterwards, their authority was extended, and they were empowered to grant indulgences, to publish crusades, to animate nations and princes, to put themselves at the head of the crusaders, and to lead them on to the extirpation of heretics. In later times, the Inquisition was also made use of, to condemn as heretical all books in which the rights of temporal princes and potentates are carried too far in the opinion of the court of Rome; and every occasion was seized for enlarging its powers in order to render it a more effective instrument, under the pretext of religion, against all who should dare to oppose the temporal pretensions of the Pope. This terrible engine of the most cruel tyranny was gradually introduced into all the Italian States, excepting Naples, into some of the provinces of France, and into the kingdoms of Spain and Portugal: but the Papal See was baffled in all its attempts to obtain the formal establishment of the justly dreaded tribunal in the other European States.

The Inquisition comprehended under the name of heretics all who spoke, wrote, taught, or preached any thing contrary to the Holy Scriptures and the traditions of the Church; all who praised the customs and ceremonies of other religions, or held that it was possible to be saved in any other Church than the

Romish; all who maintained opinions contrary to those received at Rome and in Italy respecting the sovereign and unlimited authority of the Popes, their superiority even to general councils, and their power in temporal matters over princes; in short, all who spoke, wrote, or taught against the determinations made by the Popes on any subject whatever.

The mere suspicion of heresy opened a still wider field to the operation of the Inquisition. To speak against the sacraments, to deface or destroy images, to keep or lend forbidden books, to abstain from the ordinary practices of Catholics, as, for example, to pass a whole year without confessing and communicating, to eat meat on fast days, to neglect attending mass on the days prescribed by the Church, were each a sufficient cause for incurring that suspicion. To save, to assist, or to favour a heretic in any way whatever was a crime: nay, to neglect to denounce one, even though the nearest and dearest relative, was an offence which exposed a person to excommunication, and to the horrors of the Inquisition, as a suspected heretic. This tribunal likewise took cognizance of charges of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft; and, as the belief in these imaginary crimes was almost universal, especially in Italy, none contributed so much as they did to crowd the prisons with women of all conditions. But with the Inquisition the most heinous of all transgressions was to give any, even the slightest, offence to its officers. This was held to be a capital crime, and neither birth nor character, neither office, nor

rank, nor dignity, was a safeguard from the penalty. If, therefore, a man was seized in the midst of his friends, or in the circle of his family, not a hand durst be lifted in his defence, not a voice in his favour. From that moment, the prisoner was cut off from all intercourse with his kind ; without friends or kindred, without counsel, succour, or consolation, he was left to his judges and to himself, and frequently to his bitterest enemies. An exact inventory was taken of every thing found in his house and about his person ; and all or at least part of his property was seized, by way of security, for the expenses and fines which he might be sentenced to pay : for rarely did a prisoner get out of the clutches of the Inquisition without being half ruined, unless he were very rich.

The prisons of this most terrible of all tribunals were unwholesome subterraneous dungeons, situated at a distance from all traffic. To these dreary abodes the light of day never penetrated. Here the wretched prisoners were not allowed to see or to speak to any one. If the proximity of one dungeon to another allowed the inmates to converse, they were forbidden to hold communication ; and if they were overheard talking to themselves or to one another, they were most cruelly scourged. When a prisoner had passed several days, or perhaps months, without even knowing the crime of which he was accused or the witnesses against him, the jailer, as if of his own motion, advised him to apply for a hearing ; for it was an invariable maxim with this tribunal that the accused

should always be the applicant, and be made to impeach himself. When brought before his judges, they affected entire ignorance of his case, inquiring who he was, what he wanted, and if he had any thing to say. The prisoner of course gave the best account that he could of himself, and was released, as the Inquisition was too regardful of human life to send to the stake those who were brought before it for the first time ; but his family was declared infamous, and this first judgment rendered him incapable of bearing arms or of holding any office in the Church or in the State.

Spies, who were called Familiars of the Inquisition, were then sent to dog him, to pick up his every word, and to watch his every motion. These men, pretending to be his friends, wormed themselves into his confidence : and sometimes his own servants or his nearest relatives played this treacherous part. On the slightest suspicion, he was again apprehended : the wretched man was then irretrievably undone, for never was the Inquisition known to forgive twice.

After he had again languished for several months, he again applied for a hearing, at the secret suggestion of his judges, who, if they could not draw from him such a confession as they desired, ordered him to be put to the torture, of which there were three kinds. The first, called squassation, consisted in tying back the arms by a cord, fastening weights to his feet, and drawing him up to the full height of the place by means of a pulley. Having been kept suspended for

some time, he was suddenly let down with a jerk to within a little distance of the floor, and with repeated shocks all his joints were dislocated; for this species of torture was continued for an hour and sometimes longer, according to the pleasure of the inquisitors present, and to what the strength of the sufferer seemed capable of enduring. If this torture was not sufficient to overcome him, that of water was resorted to. He was obliged to swallow a great quantity, and then laid in a wooden trough, provided with a lid that might be pressed down as tight as the operators pleased. Across the trough was a bar, on which the sufferer's back rested, and by which the spine was broken. The torture by fire was equally painful. A very brisk fire was made; and, the prisoner being extended on the ground, the soles of his feet were rubbed with lard or some other combustible matter, and placed close to the fire, till the agony extorted from him such a confession as his tormentors required. Not satisfied with their success, the judges doomed their miserable victims to the torture a second time, to make them own the motive and intention for the actions which they acknowledged to have committed; and a third time, to force them to reveal their accomplices or abettors.

If these infernal cruelties failed to wring a confession, artifices and snares were resorted to. Suborned wretches were sent to their dungeons: pretending to comfort and assist them, or even to be prisoners like themselves, they launched out against the Inquisition as an insupportable tyranny and the

greatest of all the scourges with which God had ever afflicted mankind. Their dupes fell the more readily into the snare, as it is hard to withstand the services of friendship and compassion performed for us when in the extremity of misery. The Inquisitors seconded these artifices to the utmost of their power. They assured the sufferers that they sympathized with them; that all they aimed at was their conversion; that the slightest confession, which they might make to them in private, and which they promised to keep inviolably secret, would be sufficient to put an end to their afflictions and to procure their liberation.

The upshot was that, if the accused was held to be convicted in the judgment of the Inquisitors, or by witnesses, or by his own confession, he was sentenced, according to the heinousness of the offence, to death, to perpetual imprisonment, to the galleys, flogging, or some other punishment. After condemnation, the execution was deferred for one or perhaps several years, that the sacrifice of a great number of delinquents at once might produce a more striking and terrible effect.

The wholesale executions of the Inquisition, being considered as a religious ceremony, were styled in Spain and Portugal Autos-da-fé, or Acts of Faith. These were celebrated in general at the accession of a king to the crown, or on occasion of his majority, of his marriage, or of the birth of an heir-apparent. By the besotted and priest-ridden inhabitants of those countries, these horrible sights were at last regarded

nearly in the light of public amusements. Executions on a smaller scale took place every year towards the conclusion of Lent, on the Friday immediately preceding Good Friday.

By daybreak, the tolling of the great bell of the cathedral summoned the faithful to the horrid tragedy. Persons of the highest distinction eagerly offered their services to escort the victims; and grandees were often seen assuming the character of familiars of the Inquisition. The Dominicans, with the standard of the execrable tribunal, opened the procession. The condemned walked barefoot, with a pointed cap on their heads, and dressed in a *san-benito*, a yellow frock, with a cross on the breast and on the back, and covered with painted representations of the faces of fiends. The penitents, on whom some penance only was imposed, came first, and after the cross, which was borne behind them, followed such as were doomed to die. Effigies of persons who had escaped, and the remains of the dead that had incurred condemnation, appeared in the fearful procession lying in black coffins, on which were painted flames and infernal figures: and it was closed by priests and monks. Passing through the principal streets of the city to the cathedral, a sermon was preached, and their sentence read to the delinquents, each of them standing meanwhile, with an extinguished taper in his hand, before a crucifix. A servant of the Inquisition then smote them on the breast with his hand, to signify that the tribunal had ceased to have any power over

them. The condemned were then delivered up to an officer of the civil authority, and soon afterwards conducted to the place of execution. Each was asked in what faith he would die; if he said in the Catholic, he was strangled before he was burned; the others, who persisted in their opinions, were consigned alive to the flames. These *auto-da-fés*, of which the professed historians of the Inquisition give such harrowing details as thrill the blood with horror, the people of both sexes and all ages thronged to witness with transports of satisfaction and joy surpassing those displayed on any other occasion. Even kings deemed it a meritorious act to attend those cruel exhibitions, with their whole court, and to feast their eyes on the torments of the wretched sufferers.

The effects, moveable and immoveable, of all the prisoners condemned to death were confiscated: as for the others, their property, having been seized immediately after their apprehension, was almost entirely consumed before they were released, through the mismanagement of the sequestrators, peculation, confiscations, and fines.

From the mode of proceeding adopted in the Inquisition, it could not be otherwise than that many innocent persons should perish along with the guilty. This was a fact admitted by the Inquisitors themselves, but which gave them no sort of concern; for it was one of their principal maxims—better put to death a hundred Catholics irreproachable in their faith, than let one heretic escape. The former, they

argued, were sure of paradise ; whereas, a heretic, if he gets off, may infect and lead to perdition a great number of souls.

Neither were those innocent sufferers allowed to complain of the injustice which they experienced : this would have been a fresh crime, which would have been punished with the more severity, since it involved the reputation of the tribunal, which never acknowledged itself to be in the wrong. Of course, they had no other consolation than that held forth to them by the Directory of the Inquisitors, in these words : “ Let no one complain that he is condemned unjustly, or murmur against the ecclesiastical judges, or the judgment of the Church. But, if he is unjustly condemned, let him rejoice in that he is condemned for justice.” If this language was not intended for insulting mockery, it wears at least all the appearance of such : in what other light can it be viewed, when addressed to men who find themselves stripped of all they possessed, or have been condemned to the galleys, to exile, to perpetual imprisonment, or even to a most cruel and infamous death !

The power of this infernal tribunal extended to the dead as well as to the living. Even the bones of persons long consigned to the grave, when competent evidence could be found to convict them of heresy, torn from their resting-places, were doomed to the flames, and their property to confiscation.

The court of Rome considered the Inquisition as its masterpiece, as the firmest and most solid support

of its power, spiritual and temporal. Hence it put all things under the feet of this tribunal in the countries subject to its authority. There the most extravagant maxims were held to be incontestable, and the most unfounded pretensions established beyond dispute. Thus the infallibility of the Popes, their superiority to general councils, their dominion over the possessions of all the churches in the world, the power to dispose of them as they pleased, their pretended authority over the temporal concerns of sovereigns, the right which they claim of deposing them, of absolving their subjects from the oath of allegiance, and giving away their dominions, are maxims which none dared to doubt in the countries of the Inquisition, much less to contest them, lest they should expose themselves to all the horrors of that detestable tribunal. No wonder that the Popes, in return, so warmly supported all its pretensions, and earnestly and incessantly laboured to procure for it so extensive an authority, that it at length became formidable to the very princes by whom it was adopted.

But in no country of Christendom did the Inquisition acquire such unbounded power as in Spain. There it was introduced so early as the middle of the 13th century; though, in some of the petty kingdoms into which the Spanish peninsula was then divided, the States manfully opposed its admission, particularly in Castile and Leon, where the bishops asserted their exclusive right of judging in all religious matters. When, however, all these minor sovereignties

had, in the course of the next two centuries, gradually merged into one monarchy, its rulers, the crafty Ferdinand and Isabella, perceived what important aid they might derive from the employment of such an engine as the Inquisition, in the execution of their ambitious, arbitrary, and cruel plans. They had already made several successful attempts towards reducing the power of the feudal nobility, and investing the Crown with absolute authority. The population of Spain at this time was composed of Christians, Jews, and Mohamedans. The Moors still retained the kingdom of Granada, which, however, was already threatened by the preparations of Ferdinand and Isabella. In the principal cities of Spain, the Jews had their synagogues, and formed a distinct class from the rest of the inhabitants. The commerce of the country was for the most part in their hands; they were the farmers of the sovereigns and of the grantees, and the only burden imposed upon them was a moderate poll-tax, which they were obliged to pay to the clergy. The wealth which they had acquired by industry excited great envy and hatred against them, and these passions were fostered by ignorant priests. About a century earlier, the sermons of a fanatical monk, Fernan Martinez Nuñez, who preached up the persecution of the Jews as a good work, were the principal cause of the riots which took place, in 1391 and 1392, in various cities, where the populace rose and plundered and murdered the Jews, many of whom, in order to save their lives, submitted to be baptized.

After the reduction of several restless grandees in the South of Spain, cardinal Mendoza, archbishop of Seville, made, in 1477, the first attempt to establish a Tribunal of the Faith. By his command, punishments, both public and private, were inflicted on many of the inhabitants of Seville of Jewish descent, who were accused of secretly following in their houses the laws and customs of their forefathers. A plan was formed for extending the same species of Inquisition over the whole country, and submitted to the government by Mendoza. Ferdinand and Isabella approved the establishment of such an institution, which promised at once to gratify the persecuting spirit of the age, and to be a useful tool in the hands of the State. It was calculated that, by means of this tribunal, wholly dependent on the court, the Jews, both secret and acknowledged, and the Mohamedans, might be suppressed, the royal treasury enriched by the property of all delinquents which would devolve to it, and the power of the grandees and even of the clergy curbed.

Two grand obstacles, however, required removing before the Inquisition could be solidly established in Castile. The consent of the States was absolutely necessary ; and some value, it was considered, ought to be attached to the consent of the Pope. The institution of the new tribunal proposed by the cardinal was therefore the most important question discussed at the diet of Toledo in 1480. When the superior administrative authorities, the supreme council of

Castile, the council of State, and the council of Aragon, were confirmed by the States, he declared that it was necessary to have likewise a permanent tribunal for matters relating to the faith, and for the administration of the ecclesiastical police. In spite of all opposition, it was determined that such a tribunal should be instituted by the name of General Inquisition; and it was opened at Seville in 1481.

The first Grand Inquisitor, who indeed was appointed three years before, was Thomas de Torquemada, prior of the Dominican convent at Segovia, and confessor to cardinal Mendoza. He nominated 200 assistant inquisitors, and had a body-guard of 50 horse; so that the Dominican convent soon became too small for the numerous prisoners, and the king was obliged to give up the palace in the Triana suburb to the tribunal. At the first *auto-da-fé*, or execution, which was always kept as a grand festival, seven relapsed Christians were burned, and many more did penance. Hereupon, 17,000 persons, as Spanish historians relate, accused themselves to the Inquisition; upwards of 2000 were doomed to the flames in the first years, and a much greater number fled to the neighbouring countries.

The Pope, for his part, had opposed the foundation of the Spanish Inquisition, a metamorphosis of an ecclesiastical into a secular tribunal. Soon after the appointment of the new Inquisitor, he had authorised the archbishop of Toledo, a bitter enemy of Mendoza's, to bring to judgment a professor of Salamanca, who

was accused of heretical opinions, and several times cited the Inquisitor-general to Rome; but Torquemada, instead of obeying the summons, sent a friend to conduct his defence. A warm dispute ensued between the court of Spain and the Pope, till, in 1483, Sixtus IV. was obliged to give way, and to confirm Torquemada as Inquisitor-general of Castile and Leon. At the same time, he was empowered by the papal bull to establish such subordinate tribunals for religious matters as he might think proper, to displace the judges previously appointed by the Pope, and to remodel the former mode of proceeding, in cases of heresy, according to the new system. A subsequent bull subjected Aragon, Valencia, and likewise Sicily, then under the sway of Ferdinand, to the jurisdiction of the Inquisitor-general of Castile; and thus the Inquisition became the supreme tribunal in both the kingdoms composing the Spanish monarchy; for, at the assembly held at Tarragona in 1484, the States of Aragon were obliged to swear to protect it.

The introduction of this tyrannical institution excited ferments and insurrections in various parts of Spain. Shocked by the cruelty of the judges, perhaps also excited by the jealous bishops, various cities, and Saragossa in particular, refused to admit the Inquisitors, several of whom were sacrificed by the popular fury. The power of the Crown soon overcame this resistance: thenceforward, the kings became absolute judges in matters of religion, and the honour, the property, and the life of every subject

wre at their arbitrary disposal. They appointed the Grand Inquisitor, and by them, or at least under their immediate influence, the assistant-judges were elected, and two of these were always members of the supreme council of Castile. Thus this tribunal became wholly dependent on the court, and a powerful instrument for founding the despotic authority of the sovereign on the ruins of the ancient liberties of the country, for reducing the mighty influence of the clergy, for crushing the high-spirited nobility, and for suppressing the privileges of the States.

The confiscated property of condemned persons devolved to the king, and, even when it was given to the Inquisition, he had power to specify the purpose to which it was to be applied. Ferdinand and Isabella, indeed, expended part of the produce of these confiscations in the endowment of monasteries or hospitals; still, much wealth was diverted from the Church by the Inquisition; and that this institution was obliged to serve as a tool for replenishing the royal coffers exhausted by war is proved by an ordinance issued by Torquemada in 1487; for so early as that was the treasury of the Inquisition drained by royal assignments to such a degree that the salaries of the officials could not be paid.

The first ordinance of Torquemada's, declaring that this court was to be held for the service of God and of their highnesses, was issued in 1484: by virtue of it, proclamation was to be made in every parish, enjoining heretics or relapsed Papists to denounce

themselves to the Inquisition within the space of thirty or forty days. Torquemada, tormented by gout, resigned his office ; and, dying in 1498, was buried in the Dominican convent at Avila, which, founded with the confiscated property of heretics, was, strictly speaking, a monument of his cruel activity.

At first, the jurisdiction of the Inquisition was not precisely determined : by the ordinance of 1484, tribunals subordinate to the Inquisitor-general were established in the provinces of Spain. In later times, the supreme court was at Madrid. The Grand Inquisitor was its president ; of the six or seven assistant judges, whom he nominated at the king's recommendation, one, agreeably to an ordinance issued by Philip III., was always a Dominican. Under him were a fiscal, two secretaries, a receiver, two referendaries, and several officials, as they were called, appointed by the president with the king's assent. The court sat every day, excepting holidays, in the royal palace ; and, on the last three days in the week, two members of the council of Castile were present. It was the duty of the fiscal to examine the statements of witnesses, to denounce delinquents, to apply for their apprehension, and to accuse them when secured. The secretary, besides making minutes of the proceedings, was charged to watch in the strictest manner the slightest motions of the accusers, witnesses, and accused, by which their most secret feelings might be betrayed. The officials were persons employed in apprehending

the accused. A sequestrator, who was obliged to give security to the court, had the management of the confiscated property, the produce of which was handed to the receiver, who paid the salaries and discharged the assignments to which the funds of the tribunal were liable. The number of the agents and spies of the Inquisition, called familiars, was computed to exceed 20,000; and such offices were sought after even by members of the highest families, because considerable civil immunities and ample indulgences were attached to them.

The Jews and the Moors were the especial objects of the persecution of the Inquisition in Spain. The former, who were very numerous in that country, were left, till the second half of the 14th century, in nearly undisturbed enjoyment of their privileges, which were considerable. Favoured by the sovereigns, they were appointed to public offices, allowed to have their own court of justice, and to acquire landed property. With the increasing power of priests, the impoverishment of the nobles, and the abuses arising from their own usurious transactions, they became more and more exposed to envy, hatred, and persecution. In Aragon, during a season of extraordinary drought, they were expelled from the cities; and in 1391 and 2 an indiscriminate slaughter destroyed great numbers of them in Seville, Cordova, Toledo, Valencia, Catalonia, and Majorca. Many saved their lives by submitting to be baptized, or by flight to Africa.

In the 15th century, the tyranny exercised by the Inquisition against those who had been baptized and were not allowed to emigrate, and compulsory conversions, continued to thin their numbers. Thousands were burned or subjected to cruel punishments. At length, after the conquest of Granada, Ferdinand and Isabella resolved to drive the Jews out of Spain. Accordingly, in 1492, they published an edict, commanding all those who would not change their religion to quit the Spanish dominions. The space of four months was, however, allowed them to decide, with permission to sell their property, to carry with them what they could, and to retire whithersoever they should think fit. At the same time, all Christians were forbidden, on the severest penalties, to hold intercourse with those people, or to supply them with provisions and munitions.

It is not known how many Jews left Spain on this occasion: some authors compute them at 170,000 families, others at 800,000 souls. Vast numbers retired to Africa, Italy, and the East. Eighty thousand settled in Portugal, on the frontiers of Spain; but they were received only on condition of paying a yearly tax of eight gold crowns per head for the right of hospitality; and this was granted merely for a certain term, after which they were to seek a retreat in some other country, upon pain of being made slaves. In 1495, king Emanuel commanded all Jews to leave his dominions, and directed the children of the poor above the age of fourteen years to be taken

from them, and shipped off to the Serpent Islands. The last Jews emigrated in 1497; and, in 1506, 2000 of the new converts, who had embraced popery to evade the decree of expulsion, were slaughtered in Lisbon. The lot of the same class in Spain, under the lingering horrors of the Inquisition, was, if any thing, still more pitiable.

After the conquest of the kingdom of Granada by Ferdinand the Catholic in 1491, part of the Moors retired to Africa, but most of them remained in Spain, and great numbers of these assumed the external appearance of Christianity. Here they continued to live as industrious and quiet subjects, till that sanguinary bigot, Philip II., in his cruel zeal for Popery, resolved upon their total destruction. In 1571, his oppressions and persecutions drove the Moors of Granada into insurrection, after the extinction of which 100,000 of them were expelled. Philip III., instigated by the same inhuman spirit of religious intolerance, and urged by the Inquisition, renewed the persecution of the Moors, and finally decreed their total expulsion from the kingdom of Spain, on the plea that, though these people conformed externally to the rites of Christianity, they were still Mahometans in their hearts, and might corrupt the true believers. Thirty days only were allowed them to prepare for their departure, and death was the threatened penalty for remaining beyond that time. In this dilemma, the descendants of the ancient conquerors of Spain elected a king,

and attempted to oppose the royal mandate ; but, unprovided with arms, they were soon compelled to submit. By this equally barbarous and impolitic measure, Spain lost about a million of her most industrious inhabitants. It is universally admitted that the expulsion of the Jews, whose commercial activity brought great wealth into the country, and of the Moors, whose agricultural skill and industry were a still more important source of prosperity, was the main cause of the subsequent rapid decline of Spain from the most powerful state in Europe to comparative insignificance.

Such were the deplorable effects of that spirit of immitigable intolerance, praised, preached, and imperatively enjoined, as one of the highest of Christian virtues, by the antichristian See of Rome !

The possession of powers so extensive and so uncontrolled as those of the Inquisitor-general, naturally generated an arrogance unmatched save by that which the wearers of the tiara themselves exhibited. I shall quote one or two instances.

Among the reports circulated respecting the abdication of the emperor Charles V., the most extraordinary was that the intercourse which he had had with the German Protestants had given him some inclination for their opinions, and that he had gone into retirement, that he might have liberty to end his days in exercises of piety conformable with his disposition. It was alleged that he could not forgive himself for the manner in which he had treated

the brave princes of that party, whom the fortune of arms had thrown into his power; and that their virtue, which in their adversity shamed his success, had insensibly excited in his heart a sort of esteem for their opinions. This esteem was manifested in the choice which he made of persons, all suspected of heresy, for his spiritual guides—Dr. Caculla, his preacher, the archbishop of Toledo, and, above all, Ponce, bishop of Dresse, his confessor.

It is further related that a singular circumstance contributed to this change in Charles's sentiments. Among the occupations with which he beguiled the solitary hours of his retirement was the making of wooden clocks. Finding that it was impossible to make two of them to go exactly alike, he is said to have been deeply struck with the folly of his own former efforts to force millions of men to square their opinions according to one standard.

Such an acknowledgment, if it really was made, was well worthy of the monarch, who, when urged to take Luther into custody, in violation of his letter of safe-conduct, when the Reformer appeared before the diet of Worms, on the ground that, according to the orthodox Popish maxim, faith ought not to be kept with heretics, made this noble reply: "I will not, like Sigismund, my predecessor, have cause to *blush*." In this answer, Charles alluded to the case of the intrepid Huss, who, being sentenced to the flames, insisted on the performance of the pledge

given by the emperor for his safety, and as he spoke fixed his eyes on Sigismund. The appeal brought a deep blush into the face of the false-hearted prince.

Soon after the decease of Charles, it became known that, in the cell in which was his abode in the convent of St. Just, near Placencia, in Estremadura, there had been found many papers written by him on religious subjects, which deviated but little from the doctrines of the Protestants. But nothing tended to confirm the notion of a leaning to their opinions so much as his last will. He had left no legacies to the Church, or to found masses for the good of his soul; and the document differed so much in language from the testamentary papers of zealous Catholics, that the Inquisition of Castile deemed itself authorized to institute proceedings against it.

The Inquisitors durst not, however, make any stir till the arrival of his son, Philip II., not knowing his sentiments and how he might take the matter. But this prince, having marked his arrival in Spain by the execution of all the partisans of the new opinions, the Inquisition, emboldened by his example, first attacked the archbishop of Toledo, primate of Spain, next Caculla, and lastly Ponce, the late emperor's confessor.

The king having suffered all three to be imprisoned, the people regarded this permission as an evidence of his zeal for religion: but the rest of the

world beheld with horror the man in whose arms the emperor had expired consigned, with the consent of his own son, to the most cruel and ignominious of all punishments. In fact, the Inquisition not only accused those three persons of having had a share in the emperor's will, but had the hardihood to condemn them, along with that document and many of the monks of St. Just, to the flames.

Philip, whose inhuman soul was jealous of his father's glory, at first felt some pleasure at seeing his memory exposed to this insult; but, roused by the noise which this sentence made in the world, he prevented the complete execution of it, by the gentlest and most secret means that he could devise, so as not to irritate the Inquisitors or to lower the authority of their tribunal. Caculla was burned alive, together with the effigy of Ponce, who had died in prison a few days before. The archbishop of Toledo appealed to Rome; it was only by the influence of friends and money that he extricated himself from the danger; and nothing further was said about the will of the emperor.

Another instance of the daring presumption of those priests was exhibited in the time of Philip III. That king, being present at an *auto-da-fé*, at which two monks were burned for holding some new opinions in religion, expressed some pity for the sufferers. The Grand Inquisitor, when informed of the circumstance, openly quarrelled with the king, and would not be reconciled till he had received a cupful

of his most Catholic majesty's blood, which he then caused to be burnt by the executioner.

Indeed, it was not always that royal spectators deigned to bestow so much as pity on the agonized sufferers. In a letter to bishop Burnet, written at Lisbon, in 1706, by Mr. Wilcox, afterwards bishop of Gloucester, he describes the execution of a man and a woman. The practice there was to set up so many stakes as there were prisoners to be burned. These stakes were about four yards high, and within half a yard of the top was attached a small board, on which the prisoner was seated when chained to the stake. Round the foot was piled a considerable quantity of dry furze. The flame, however, seldom reached higher than the seat, and, if there happened to be a wind, it seldom reached so high as the knees of the sufferer; who, if it was calm, might expire in half an hour, but, if windy, might survive an hour and a half or two hours, till really roasted, not burnt, to death. In the case mentioned by Wilcox, the woman was alive in the flames half an hour, the man about an hour. The king and his brother were seated at a window so near, that the latter, while burning, addressed them for a considerable time in the most moving terms. The only favour he implored was a few more faggots, but even this he could not obtain. The wind being a little fresh, his hinder parts were absolutely roasted; and, as he turned himself round, his ribs opened before he left off speaking, the fire being recruited as it wasted, to keep him just in the

same degree of heat; nor could all his entreaties procure a larger allowance of wood to despatch him more speedily.

Grievously as the national character of the Spaniards, once so generous, noble, frank, and light-hearted, was debased by the influence of this tribunal of blood, so deeply did the ancient glory of Spain decline under that change. It was not till the eighteenth century that, though the Inquisition retained its original constitution almost unaltered, yet the horrors of that dark tribunal began gradually to abate. The awful spectacle of an auto-da-fé was more rarely exhibited. If we consider the most remarkable demonstrations of its activity during that period, we shall nevertheless find that this institution, in spite of the restrictive vigilance exercised by a more enlightened policy, continued to be a tool which, under more favourable circumstances, was capable of producing revolting effects. If, in 1714, it condemned several monks to death on account of their infamous lives, and, in 1784 and 1804, doomed several persons to imprisonment and penance for making philtres and telling fortunes, or imposed recantation and ecclesiastical chastisement on many more for indiscreet expressions, no one could discover in such circumstances cause for alarm. So much the more strongly must it have been excited, when, in 1763, several heretics were consigned to the flames at an auto-da-fé at Llerena; when, even in 1777, the Inquisition armed itself with all its terrors against

Olavides, for his patriotic attempt to bring the wastes of the Sierra Morena into cultivation by the labour of foreign colonists; and when, in 1780, an old woman at Seville was sentenced by this tribunal to be burned alive as convicted of witchcraft.

Such was the barbarous spirit of the Inquisition till it was suppressed by Napoleon, in 1808. After its restoration by Ferdinand VII., many enlightened men strove to destroy the superannuated tool of a gloomy policy, but without success; till it was totally abolished by the constitution of the Cortes, in 1820, and, on the recommendation of the principal European powers, in 1823, not again restored.

Llorente, in his History of the Spanish Inquisition, compiled from its own records, calculates that, from the year 1481 to 1808, this tribunal condemned, in Spain alone, 341,021 persons. Of these 31,912 were burned in person, 17,659 in effigy, and severe penances were imposed on 291,456.

I shall not dilate further on the horrors practised under the pretext of religious zeal by this most atrocious institution than to extract some interesting particulars, not so generally known, respecting the state of the prisons of the Inquisition at Toledo, on the arrival of the French in that city. The narrative is furnished by a French officer, who served in the corps under general Lasalle. After describing the manner in which an entrance was forced by cannon, and the liberation of the prisoners, many of whom were butchered by the populace, he thus proceeds:

“ Graves seemed to open, and pale figures, like ghosts, issued from the dungeons, which emitted a sepulchral odour. Bushy beards, hanging down over the breast, nails grown to the length of birds’ claws, disfigured the skeletons, who, with labouring bosom, inhaled, for the first time during a long series of years, the reviving breath of beneficent Nature. Many of them were reduced to cripples, the back arched, the head inclined forward on one side, and arms and hands hanging down, rigid and helpless. On closer examination, it was found that these poor wretches had been confined in dens so low, that they could not rise up in them, and hence their bodies had, during a long imprisonment, naturally contracted this distorted form. In spite of all the care of the regimental surgeons, several of them expired the same day. The light of the sun made a particularly painful impression on the optic nerves. From this portraiture of these unfortunate creatures, the state of the prison may be so accurately inferred, that it is unnecessary to give a more particular description of it.

“ On the following day, general Lasalle minutely inspected the whole place, attended by several officers of his staff. The number of machines for torture, especially the rack for stretching limbs, and the drop-baths, producing one of the most lingering of deaths, which are already well known, thrilled even men inured to the battle-field with horror. Only one of these implements, unique in its kind for refined cruelty, and disgraceful to reason and religion for the

choice of its object, seems deserving of more particular notice.

“In a recess in a subterraneous vault, contiguous to the private hall for examinations, stood a wooden figure, made by the hands of monks, and representing the Virgin Mary. A gilded glory encompassed her head, and in her right hand she held a banner. It struck us all, at first sight, that, notwithstanding the silken robe, descending on each side in ample folds from her shoulders, she should wear a sort of cuirass. On closer scrutiny, it appeared that the forepart of the body was stuck full of extremely sharp nails and small narrow knife-blades, with the points of both turned towards the spectator. The arms and hands were jointed; and machinery behind the partition set the figure in motion. One of the servants of the Inquisition was compelled, by command of the general, to work the *machine*, as he termed it. When the figure extended her arms, as though to press some one most lovingly to her heart, the well-filled knapsack of a Polish grenadier was made to supply the place of a living victim. The statue hugged it closer and closer; and, when the attendant, agreeably to orders, made the figure unclasp her arms and return to her former position, the knapsack was perforated to the depth of two or three inches, and remained hanging on the points of the nails and knife-blades. To such an infernal purpose, and in a building erected in honour of the true faith, was the Madonna rendered subservient! — she, the immaculate

and the blessed, who transfused celestial grace into the pencils of the greatest painters, and the highest charm of which art is susceptible, into the works of the most eminent sculptors !

“ One of the familiars, as they are called, of the Inquisition gave us an account of the customary mode of proceeding on using this machine. The substance of his report was as follows :

“ Persons accused of heresy, or of blaspheming God or the saints, and obstinately refusing to confess their guilt, were conducted into this cellar, at the further end of which numerous lamps, placed round a recess, threw a variegated light on the gilded glory, and on the head of the figure and the flag in her right hand. At a little altar, standing opposite to her, and hung with black, the prisoner received the sacrament ; and two ecclesiastics earnestly admonished him, in the presence of the mother of God, to make a confession. ‘ See,’ said they, ‘ how lovingly the blessed Virgin opens her arms to thee ! on her bosom thy hardened heart will be melted ; there thou wilt confess.’ All at once, the figure began to raise her extended arms : the prisoner, overwhelmed with astonishment, was led to her embraces ; she drew him nearer and nearer, pressed him almost imperceptibly closer and closer, till the spikes and knives pierced his breast. Either agony and terror extorted a confession from the writhing wretch ; or, if he still withheld it, he remained insensible in the arms of the figure, while the blood trickled from a hundred small but not mortal

wounds. Oil and healing balsam were applied to them; and on a carpet, spread at the feet of the figure, in the vault now brilliantly lighted up, he was left to come to himself. If this experiment failed, he was remanded to his dungeon, there probably to await fresh torments.

“It deserves remark, that the barbarians, by a perversion of language worthy of Satan himself, gave this machine of torture the appellation of *Madre dolorosa* — not the afflicted, but the afflicting mother.” *

* The World in Miniature—Spain and Portugal, i. 171-180.

IV. PERSECUTION OF THE LOLLARDS.

The firmness of the first Norman sovereigns of England saved this country from being absorbed into that universal monarchy which Pope Gregory VII. and his successors were exerting all their influence and authority, temporal and spiritual, to establish. The progress of usurpation was for a time averted, till the struggle between Henry II. and the inflexible spirit of Becket occasioned the first collision between the royal and the papal power. The original subject of dispute, the exemption of ecclesiastics from secular jurisdiction, resolved itself at last into the question, whether the authority of the State should bow to that of the Church. The contest terminated triumphantly for the latter, and brought the king, a naked penitent, to receive personal chastisement at the tomb of the presumptuous prelate. The next century witnessed a still more ignominious degradation—a king of England receiving his surrendered crown from the hands of the papal legate, and binding himself, as a vassal of the Holy See, to the payment of a yearly tribute !

It was during the inglorious reign of this sovereign

and his successor that the inhuman crusade against the Albigenses seemed to have consolidated the fabric of papal power too firmly to be shaken. Though the destruction appeared to be complete, yet many a remnant of the innocent victims of bigotry and rapacity was scattered over Europe, to spread their doctrines and their hatred of the inhuman persecutors. There is every reason to believe that the sympathy excited by the sufferings of these people extended to England, where, it is certain, a spirit of indignant resistance to the Catholic hierarchy began to manifest itself about the time of those execrable massacres. The voice of parliament began to remonstrate against the rapacity and insolence of the pontiffs, and murmurs of discontent were sometimes wrung from the clergy themselves, by the shameless extortions of their spiritual chief. By none was the spirit of religious freedom displayed with greater energy than by Grostete, bishop of Lincoln. By his opposition to the exactions and usurpations of Innocent IV., he incurred excommunication; and, though the thunderbolt fell harmless at his feet, we may thence infer how far both the Church and the sovereign of England maintained their independence of the papal power. It was not, however, till the days of Edward III. that the degrading tribute imposed upon John was formally shaken off, and legislative provision made against the systematic encroachments of Popery.

Meanwhile, England was, for several centuries,

peculiarly distinguished for the purity of its faith. It is true that, in the reign of Henry II., a party of foreigners not exceeding thirty settled in the country, bringing with them, according to the representations of their enemies, various extravagant doctrines, such as the rejection of the sacraments and of marriage—charges, by the by, which the Church of Rome never failed to allege against all those whom it chose to brand as heretics. They are conjectured to have belonged to the sect called Cathari, then both numerous and active in the north of Italy and Germany. Their demeanour was inoffensive, and their lives were blameless ; but their opinions, differing from those authorised by the Church, drew upon them the severity of ecclesiastical discipline. Summoned, by royal authority, before a synod of bishops, to arguments they answered that their duty was to believe, not to dispute ; to threats, that Christ said, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.” The judges, wearied out by their “obstinacy,” says Lingard, the popish historian of England, “consigned them to the secular arm, by which they were branded on the forehead, stripped to the waist, and whipped through the city of Oxford,” where the synod was held. According to one account, they were turned out, utterly destitute of food, raiment, and shelter, to perish miserably. Another party of sectarians, supposed to have been fugitive Albigenses, who arrived in the country during the

reign of John, experienced a similar fate, some of them, as Knighton tells us, being burned alive.

Notwithstanding their submission to the doctrines and discipline of the Romish Church, the kings and people of England could not endure contentedly the exactions of the pontiffs. Though the galling formality of homage first imposed upon John was universally evaded, and, from the time of Henry III., the odious tribute of a thousand marks was frequently suspended, still the Popes took good care to reap their reward for the generosity of Innocent III. in restoring his own crown to the English sovereign. Their extortionate rapacity during the 13th century, and the amount of wealth, of which England was incessantly drained by them, almost surpass belief: but their insatiable thirst of money and power received many a check, even in those early times, from discourteous parliaments and sturdy barons.

Soon after the accession of Henry III., the court of Rome transmitted a demand that the revenues of two prebendaries in every cathedral, and of two monks in every monastery in the kingdom, should be granted to the Pope, for the better support of his dignity; and this modest demand was extended to the whole Christian world. When this project was laid before the parliament in 1226, they returned the evasive answer that "this affair concerned all Christendom, and that they would conform to the resolutions of the other Christian countries."

Two years afterwards, however, the Pope had his revenge. On the death of the primate, cardinal Langton, in 1228, the monks of Canterbury claimed the right of electing his successor, but were opposed by the king, who not only had the weakness to refer the matter in dispute to Rome, but to purchase a decision in his favour by a promise of a tenth of all the moveable property, both of the clergy and laity of England. A legate was sent to collect the produce of this royal robbery. The parliament, and especially the lay barons, stoutly resisted the demand, but were at length obliged to submit to the united force of the papal and regal authority. Matthew Paris relates that the legate, to shorten his own work, obliged the bishops to pay for the inferior clergy; and, when any of them complained that they had not the money, he introduced to them Italian usurers, whom he had brought with him, and who lent them the sums required at exorbitant interest.

By successive invasions of the rights not only of the Crown, but also of private patrons, the Popes had contrived to get into their hands the disposal of most of the higher stations in the Church, and of the valuable livings in the kingdom; and these were generally bestowed upon Italians. This abuse became so intolerable, that, in 1232, a great number of persons of rank associated for the express purpose of driving those foreigners out of the country, insulting their persons, and plundering their houses, to the delight of the whole nation.

The spirit of the barons was still more decidedly manifested a few years later, when nuncios and legates relieved one another in the work of fleecing this unhappy country. Weary of the plunder of the Romish harpies, the great barons sent orders in 1245 to the wardens of the seaports to seize all persons bringing bulls or mandates from Rome. It was not long before a messenger was apprehended with a fresh cargo of bulls, addressed to Martin, the papal legate in England, empowering him to exact more money from the clergy on various pretences. The bulls were seized. The legate complained bitterly of this daring insult to the king, who ordered the bulls to be delivered to Martin. The barons, in order to open the eyes of the infatuated monarch, laid before him an account of the prodigious sums extracted from England by the court of Rome; from one of the articles of which it appeared that the Church preferments held by Italians in England amounted to 60,000 marks per annum—a sum exceeding the ordinary revenues of the Crown. Henry, though amazed, had not the spirit to put a stop to those grievances. Not so the barons. Determined to go through with the work which they had begun, they held another meeting at Dunstable, under pretence of a tournament, and despatched a bold knight to command the legate, in the name of the barons of England, to leave the kingdom immediately. The order was duly delivered; and the bearer assured Martin that, if he was not out of the country in three days, he would infallibly be

cut in pieces. The threat was too serious to be slighted; and, perceiving that it was no longer in the king's power to protect him, the legate made a precipitate retreat.

The barons, to prevent if possible the recurrence of the oppressions which the kingdom had long suffered from the See of Rome, sent a deputation to lay their grievances before a general council assembled at Lyons, at which the Pope presided in person. A letter from the barons, presented to the council by these ambassadors, contained a full and free enumeration of the oppressions of the court of Rome, and concluded with this bold declaration: "We can no longer, with any patience, bear the aforesaid oppressions, which, as they are detestable to God and man, are intolerable to us; neither, by the grace of God, will we any longer endure them." One of the envoys, who presented this letter, addressed the council in a spirited speech, setting forth the numberless frauds and insatiable avarice of the court of Rome in such strong colours that a blush was seen to tinge the face of infallibility. This silent testimony of shame was all the satisfaction obtained by the nation from Innocent IV. and the council, who deferred the consideration of the affair so long, that the envoys, seeing no prospect of redress, returned to England.

"The unnatural fit of modesty with which his holiness had been seized at the council of Lyons,"

says Dr. Henry,* “was not of long duration; for in the very next year we find his agents in England as violent as ever in their extortions. These drew fresh remonstrances, not from the barons alone, but also from the king and clergy. The letters of the latter were humble and timid; while the barons boldly threatened that, if their grievances were not immediately redressed by the pontiff, they would do themselves justice. Not only were these letters treated with scorn, but Innocent obliged the English prelates to subscribe the sentence of deposition of the emperor Frederick II., and to furnish troops to fight against him, though the brother-in-law of their own sovereign. Nay, more; he demanded, in the same year, 1246, one-half of the revenues of the non-resident, and a third of those of the resident clergy. Encouraged by the king and the barons, they opposed the insolent demand, from which his holiness then thought it prudent to desist.”

To the shameless invasions and exactions of the Holy See, none made a more courageous opposition than Robert Grostete, bishop of Lincoln, a prelate of extraordinary learning and exemplary piety. When bulls were transmitted to him from Rome, he carefully examined them; and if he found that they enjoined any thing contrary to the precepts of the gospel and the interests of religion, which was very often the case, he tore them in pieces instead of putting them in execution. When Innocent IV. in

* Hist. of Great Britain, viii. 9.

one of these bulls required the bishop to bestow a considerable benefice in his gift upon his nephew, who was an infant, he indignantly replied: "Next to the sins of Lucifer and Antichrist, there cannot be a greater defection or which carries a more direct opposition to the doctrine of our Saviour and his apostles than to destroy people's souls by depriving them of the benefits of the pastoral office; and yet those persons are guilty of this sin who undertake the sacerdotal function, and receive the profits without performing the duty. Hence it is evident that those who bring such unqualified persons into the Church and debauch the hierarchy are much to blame; and that their crimes rise in proportion to the height of their station."

These were truths to which the papal ears were unaccustomed. Innocent, furious with passion, swore by St. Peter and St. Paul that he would utterly confound that old, insolent, deaf dotard, and make him an example, a talk, an astonishment, to the world. "What!" cried he, "is not his master, the king of England, our vassal, or rather our slave? and will he not at the least sign from us cast him into prison?" When his fury had somewhat cooled, the cardinals represented to him that the world began to discover the truth of many things contained in the bishop's letter; and that the persecution of a prelate so renowned for piety and learning would only serve to make the court of Rome a great many enemies. They advised him therefore to let the matter drop,

and to act as though he had never seen the provoking letter.

The tyranny of the court of Rome had at this time reached its highest pitch in England. Among the principal of the oppressions to which our forefathers were subject, they complained that the Pope, not content with the annual payment of peter-pence, exacted heavy contributions from the clergy without the king's consent, and against the customs, rights, and liberties of the realm—that the patrons of churches could not present fit persons to vacant livings, because the Pope generally conferred them on Italians ignorant of the language, and who carried out of the kingdom the money derived from their benefices—that the Pope oppressed the churches by demanding pensions from them—that Italians succeeded Italians, contrary to the decree of the council of Lyons, and that these Italians were invested in their livings without trouble or charge; whereas, the English were obliged to prosecute their rights in Rome at a great expense—that in the churches held by Italians there were neither alms nor hospitality, nor any preaching, and the care of souls was totally neglected—that the clause of *Non obstante*, generally inserted in the Pope's bulls, absolutely destroyed all laws, customs, statutes, and privileges of the Church and kingdom. Many other of their grievances were not less oppressive, such as the right assumed by the Pope to appoint to the highest dignities in the Church; and his drawing

all causes of any importance to Rome, and keeping the parties long waiting for their determination at a ruinous expense. Add to all these the great sums of which the kingdom was annually drained for pardons, dispensations, indulgences, and we shall be surprised that its resources were not completely exhausted by them. By such means it was calculated that in the middle of the thirteenth century the country was robbed in a few years only of 950,000 marks—a sum equivalent to twelve millions sterling at the present day.

If the whole nation shared this curse of papal exaction, the laity were bowed down by a double yoke, the one scarcely less galling than the other; because, riveted about their necks by domestic taskmasters—their own hierarchy—its effects were more constantly felt. The clergy claimed many privileges quite inconsistent with the peace and prosperity of the kingdom, such as an exemption from all civil authority and jurisdiction; so that they could commit the most heinous crimes almost with impunity. The ecclesiastical courts encroached greatly on the jurisdiction of the civil authority, and insisted on the sole right to judge all causes relating to tithes, marriages, wills, and many other matters, under the pretext that they had some connection with spirituals. The possessions of the clergy, too, threatened by their daily increase to swallow up the whole of the lands in the kingdom.

It required a prince with the spirit of our first

Edward to remedy some of these crying abuses. A statute of 1275 enacted that, when a clerk was indicted in the king's court for felony, he should not be delivered to his ordinary before he had undergone a trial by lawful men ; and the statute of mortmain in 1279 put a stop to the increase of the overgrown possessions of the Church by decreeing that thenceforth none should give, sell, bequeath, or in any way assign lands, tenements, or rents, to any religious body, without license from the king. Edward also made frequent demands upon the clergy for prosecuting the wars in which he was engaged. In 1294, he required of them one half of all their revenues, both spiritual and temporal. The prelates complained loudly to the Pope of this grievous encroachment on the immunities of the Church, and obtained from Boniface VIII. a bull forbidding princes to levy any taxes on the clergy in their dominions, and the clergy to pay them, threatening excommunication against both in case of disobedience. Fortified with this instrument, the clergy refused compliance with the king's demand. Edward, impressed with the importance of the point for which he was contending, and sensible that he must now establish the right of taxing the possessions of the clergy in his dominions without the consent of the Pope, or abandon it for ever, informed the clergy that, since they would not contribute to the support of his government, they should not receive protection from it. Accordingly, he ordered all his judges to do every man

justice against the clergy, but to do them justice against no man; and sent writs to all the sheriffs of counties, commanding them to seize all the lay fees of the clergy, as well secular as regular, together with their goods and chattels, and to keep them in their possession till they received his further orders. Such were the injuries and distresses brought upon the clergy by these measures, that they were very soon obliged to comply with the king's demand, in order to obtain the protection of the government and restitution of their estates.

During the 13th century, not a few changes took place in the worship and discipline of the Church. The number of festivals was considerably increased. Bells were tolled at the elevation of the host, to give notice to persons who were not in the Church to join in the devotions. In the administration of the eucharist, the cup was sometimes given to the laity, though it was declared to be no part of the sacrament, in order that the priest might spare himself the cost of wine; at others, they were put off with the washings of his fingers. Confession was more generally and more strictly enjoined, and those only who produced evidence of their having confessed were permitted to communicate. It was at this period also that general excommunications came into use. By these all who were guilty of certain vices and crimes, though known only to God and their own consciences, were declared to be excommunicated. They were at first denounced chiefly against

such as injured the clergy, by detaining their tithes, defrauding them of their dues, or stealing any thing belonging to the Church; and published in the mother tongue, by every parish priest, in the sacred vestments, with bells tolling and candles lighted, before the whole congregation, at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and All-hallows day.

In order to strike the greater terror into timid minds by these excommunications, they were compounded of the most horrible curses that could be devised. "Let them be accursed, eating and drinking, walking and sitting, speaking and holding their peace, waking and sleeping, rowing and riding, laughing and weeping, in house and in field, on water and on land, in all places. Cursed be their head and their thoughts, their eyes and their ears, their tongues and their lips, their teeth and their throats, their shoulders and their breasts, their feet and their legs, their thighs and their inward parts. Let them remain accursed, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, unless they bethink themselves and give satisfaction. And, just as this candle is deprived of its present light, so let them be deprived of their souls in hell." Such are the truly pious and Christian denunciations, which still continue to be pronounced every year at Easter against heretics by the Pope himself at St. Peter's in Rome!

Notwithstanding the impatience with which the English parliament and sovereigns opposed the harassing exactions of the Holy See, the pontiffs, so far

from abandoning them, were ever intent on devising new ones. They had lately adopted a method of securing the disposal of all ecclesiastical preferments, by making reversionary grants of benefices before they became vacant: the legal patrons were thus robbed of the right of presentation. These grants were called provisions, because they provided successors to incumbents while they were yet living. About the same time, too, the Pope laid claim to the first fruits of vacant bishoprics, which had formerly belonged to the king. For these new acts of extortion, and some others, the Papal nuncio was summoned before the parliament, and ordered to desist from them; and the inferior agents of Rome were ordered to be prosecuted with the utmost severity; but though these spirited proceedings gave a temporary check to the papal extortions, they brought no effectual remedy.

If the Popes assumed unlimited authority to themselves, a curious instance proves with what liberality they could confer extraordinary powers on others, when the grant cost them no more than the parchment on which it was engrossed. Clement V., who in the plenitude of his power promoted Reynolds, bishop of Worcester, to the primacy, in 1313, gave him authority by one of his bulls to visit the diocese of his province by proxy; by another he authorised him to absolve one hundred persons under excommunication and interdict; and by others he empowered him to release all who heard him preach or say mass from

one hundred days' penances; to bestow holy orders on one hundred bastards; to allow twelve clerks under age to hold benefices with cure of souls; and to dispense with the canons of the Church against pluralities in favour of forty clergymen.

In spite of the dissatisfaction excited in the whole English nation, the Popes obstinately pursued the system of provisions and reservations; by the latter of which they reserved to themselves the next presentation to any benefices they pleased. On these grievances Edward III. addressed a strong remonstrance to Pope Clement VI., concluding with a declaration that they were now become intolerable, and that his subjects in parliament had earnestly requested him to put a stop to them by some speedy and effectual remedy. As, however, these representations failed to make any impression, the parliament, in 1350, enacted a statute, declaring that all persons procuring reservations or provisions from the Pope, in disturbance of free elections or the presentations of the rightful patrons, should be brought to answer for the same, and, if convicted, kept in prison till they had made fine and ransom to the king at his will, and satisfied the party aggrieved by paying his damages. Another statute, that of premunire, was directed against the practice of carrying appeals to the court of Rome, and decreed that offenders should be put out of the king's protection; that their lands, goods, and chattels should be forfeited to the king, and their bodies imprisoned and ransomed at his will.

All applications to the court of Rome and all the laws enacted against its usurpations had no more effect than if they had never been made. In order to ascertain the full extent of the grievance of provisions and reservations, the king, in 1374, sent writs to all the bishops, requiring them to return certificates into Chancery of all the benefices in their respective dioceses that were in the possession of foreigners. It was probably upon the information derived from the return to these writs that, in 1376, the Commons in parliament presented to the king an urgent remonstrance, affirming, what appears almost incredible, that "the taxes paid to the Pope yearly amounted to five times as much as the taxes paid to the king."

Such is a rapid sketch of the arrogance, usurpations, extortions, and encroachments, the errors, corruptions, and abuses, which called forth the patriotic energies of the first English apostle of Reform, whose labours paved the way to the emancipation of his country from the degrading yoke of Roman bondage.

John Wicklif, surnamed after his birthplace, a village in the North Riding of Yorkshire, was educated at the University of Oxford, and there derived from profound study of the Bible and of the works of the Fathers those principles of which in maturer age he became so bold and zealous a champion. His attention was directed to the corrupt means employed by the clergy to obtain dignities and benefices. These he took up the pen to expose in 1356, and,

four years afterwards, he defended the rights of the University against the pretensions and encroachments of the Mendicant orders. The principal of these, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, were named after their founders, Dominic de Gusman, a Spaniard, and Francis of Assisi, who from a reckless debauchee became an insane fanatic. Their origin dates from the early part of the thirteenth century, and they increased so rapidly that, as early as 1327, the Council of Lyons deemed it necessary to decree that no more orders of this kind should be established. According to their primitive rules, they were to possess no property, and to live entirely upon alms. As a compensation for this self-denial, they were endowed by the Popes with important privileges. They were exempt from all temporal and episcopal jurisdiction; they were authorised to beg, to preach any where without regard to the parochial clergy, to sell masses and papal indulgences; and in return these Mendicant monks were the most zealous champions of the Romish See, on which alone they were dependent.

The learned Henry Wharton, who had closely studied the character of these Mendicant orders, gives the following striking portraiture of those impostors, of whose ambitious encroachments, immoralities, and hypocrisy, the ecclesiastical history of these times is full:—"They pretended an extraordinary call from God to reform the world and correct the faults of the secular clergy. To this end, they put on a mighty show of zeal for the good of men's

souls and of contempt for the world; accused the secular clergy of famishing the souls of men, called them dumb dogs and cursed hirelings; maintained that evangelical poverty became the ministers of the gospel; that it was unlawful for them to possess any thing, or to retain property in any worldly goods. As for the public orders of the Church, they would not be tied to them, alleging that themselves, being wholly spiritual, could not be obliged to any carnal ordinances. They broke in every where upon the parochial clergy; usurped their office; in all populous and rich places set up altars of their own; withdrew the people from the communion of the parish priest; would scarce allow the hopes of salvation to any but their own disciples, whom they bewitched with great pretences of sanctity and assiduity in preaching. These artifices had raised their reputation and interest so high, in a few years, that they wanted very little to ruin the secular clergy and therewith the Church. But, in less than an age, the cheat of these impostors became manifest to all men. They procured to their societies incredible riches; built to themselves stately palaces; infinitely surpassed that viciousness of which themselves had (perhaps unjustly) accused the secular clergy; and, long before the Reformation, became the most infamous and contemptible part of the Church of Rome."

These vermin had insinuated themselves into the University of Oxford, and aspired to nothing less

than a monopoly of academical dignities and appointments. The castigation bestowed on them by Wicklif, though it gained him warm friends in the University, yet made the monks his implacable foes; and they did not rest till they had effected his removal in 1365 from the mastership of Canterbury Hall, founded by archbishop Islip. His appeal to the Pope obtained him, of course, no redress.

Thirty-three years had now elapsed since the last payment of the degrading tribute imposed on king John, when, in 1365, Pope Urban V. took it into his head to demand the arrears and the performance of feudal homage; informing the king, Edward III., the conqueror of France, that, on failure to comply, he would be cited by process to appear at the papal court, to answer for the default to his civil and spiritual sovereign. These insolent requisitions the king submitted to the parliament, and desired their advice. The answer of the lords and commons, even now, after the lapse of nearly five centuries, must make the heart of every Englishman worthy of the name swell within him:—"Forasmuch as neither king John, nor any other king, could bring this kingdom in such thralldom and subjection but by common consent of parliament, the which was not done; therefore that which he did was against his oath at his coronation. If, therefore, the Pope should attempt any thing against the king by process or other matters in deed, the king, with all his subjects, should, with all their force and power, resist the same."

Such was the solemn legislative renunciation of national vassalage to the See of Rome. Its advocates were astounded and enraged. One of these, an anonymous monk, published in the following year a vindication of the papal claims, and challenged Wicklif, by name, to refute his arguments, and to maintain the decision of the legislature: we may of course infer that Wicklif must have been at this time publicly known as a determined adversary of papal encroachments. He was not backward at taking up the gauntlet; and he replied in a work vindicating the independence of the sovereign and nation on any foreign authority, and striking at the very foundations of the papal power, in a manner so bold and so well calculated to produce the desired impression, as to be equally honourable to his loyalty and to his address.

This performance of Wicklif's gained him the favourable notice of the court, and especially the powerful protection of king Edward's son, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, who, towards the conclusion of his father's life, had great influence over public affairs. The appointment to the Divinity chair afforded him free scope for declaring and propagating his opinions concerning the corruptions of the Church of Rome. The rapacity of the Popes, who, as we have seen, claimed the right of nominating to all benefices, and made the exercise of it a source of prodigious wealth, had for many years excited violent murmurs, not in England only but throughout all Christendom. By such means, Pope John XXII. was enabled to leave at

his death twenty-two millions of florins in his coffers. "This prodigious treasure," says Fleury, "was amassed by the industry of his holiness, who reserved for himself the reversion of the benefices of all the collegiate churches in Christendom, alleging that he did so to prevent simony. Moreover, by virtue of this reservation, he never directly confirmed the election of any prelate; but promoted a bishop to an archbishopric, and put an inferior bishop in his place: hence it frequently happened that the vacancy of an archbishopric or a patriarchate occasioned six promotions or more, producing large sums of money to the apostolic chamber."

When Innocent VI. sent Philip de Cabassole to Germany to levy the tenth of all the ecclesiastical revenues, the prelates of that country loudly complained of this new exaction. "The Romans," said one of them, exhorting his brethren to oppose it, "have always looked upon Germany as a gold mine, and invented divers means of exhausting it. What doth the Pope give to this kingdom but letters and words! Let him dispose of all benefices, as far as the collation goes; but let him leave the revenues to those who perform the duties. We send money enough to Italy for divers merchandizes, and to Avignon [where the papal court was then residing], for our sons who are studying there, or soliciting, we will not say buying, benefices. All of you well know that large sums of money are every year carried from Germany to the court of the Pope, for the confirma-

tion of prelates, for the grant of benefices, for the prosecution of suits and appeals to the Holy See; for dispensations, absolutions, indulgences, privileges, and other favours. In all times, the archbishops confirmed the elections of the bishops, their suffragans: it was Pope John XXII. who in our time wrested this right from them by violence. And now the Pope is again demanding from the clergy a new and unheard-of subsidy, threatening with censures such as will not give it, or as shall oppose it. Stop the beginning of the evil, and suffer not this disgraceful servitude to be established."

The French, who, in the 14th century, were better Christians than the people of Italy and Germany, shewed, for this very reason, more zeal in repressing the disorders and the excesses of the clergy. When, before the conclusion of that century, the Church was scandalized by the proceedings of two rival pretenders to infallibility and the papal crown, king Charles VI. formally renounced obedience to both. "We," said he, "assisted by the princes of our blood, and several others, and with the Church of our kingdom, both the clergy and the people, withdraw ourselves entirely from obedience to Pope Benedict XIII., and also to his adversary. We will that henceforth no person shall pay to Benedict, to his collectors, or other officers, any part of the ecclesiastical revenues or emoluments, and we strictly forbid all our subjects to obey him or his officers in any manner whatever." Villaret adds that Benedict, having circulated a report that

Charles had adopted this measure with the intention of setting up a Pope of his own nation in his stead, the king, in order to extinguish such a suspicion, declared in his letters that “any Pope would be agreeable to him, were he African, Arab, or Indian, provided that he did not dishonour by his passions the chair of the apostles.”

The French availed themselves of these circumstances to curb the exactions of the pontifical court. The right of freely electing prelates was restored to the churches, and the disposal of the other benefices to the collators. The art of enriching the Holy See was brought to perfection by Boniface IX. Let the reader, who is curious to pursue this subject further, turn to Fleury :* he will there find how the clergy, who possessed benefices at Rome, paid for the favour of being examined ; how the Pope, in the second and third years of his pontificate, dated bulls of benefices from the first year, and demanded the price of this antedate ; how he extended to prelacies the right of annats, that is, the reservation of the first year’s revenue of every benefice ; how he kept couriers all over Italy, in order to be speedily informed of the illness or death of prelates and dignitaries, that he might sell the same abbey, the same church, twice or three times ; and how these and other frauds, equally disgraceful, combined with the effects of the plague, and the increased mortality of the incumbents, drew

* Hist. eccles. l. xcix, n. 26.

into the coffers of his holiness innumerable contributions from all who obtained, hoped for, or coveted an ecclesiastical benefice, whether more or less lucrative.

These scandalous abuses, which had been accumulating and increasing ever since the time of Hildebrand, could not fail to excite the indignation of all upright minds in England, as well as in other countries. The Popes still insisted on their right to nominate to benefices, and exercised it in favour of persons wholly unqualified and unworthy. Many of these were foreigners, often worthless creatures of the Popes', men and even boys not acquainted with the English language, nor residing in the country, who drew large sums of money out of the kingdom, and spent their revenues abroad. To remedy this crying evil, against which several statutes had been passed, the king, in 1374, sent an embassy, at the head of which were the bishop of Bangor and Wicklif, to Bruges, to treat with the envoys of the Pope. After a negotiation of nearly two years, all they could obtain was a vague promise that his holiness would desist from presenting to English benefices—no mention was made of bishoprics—and this, of course, was never meant to be fulfilled.

If no immediate result was obtained by this mission, still the opportunities which it afforded Wicklif for observation convinced him that the system of the papal court and its doctrines were equally corrupt. These convictions he did not fail to express on his return, in the boldest manner. He insisted that the

Scriptures contain all truths necessary to salvation, and that in them only is to be found the perfect rule of Christian practice ; he denied the authority of the Pope in temporal matters ; proclaimed that he was the man of sin, the son of perdition, described by St. Paul, “ sitting as God in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God,” and denounced him as Antichrist. These doctrines Wicklif openly taught and maintained. And well he might, for at this period the Popes themselves, their court, and the clergy in general, pampered by the wealth which their rapacious arts were incessantly supplying, exhibited a corruption of morals, a depravity, a licentiousness, scarcely to be conceived, much less described. In assuming the sacerdotal office, they seemed to have vowed utterly to discard all that mankind had been accustomed to call virtue. It is impossible to read without profound horror the description given by Petrarch, himself a churchman, of the dissoluteness of the papal court in the fourteenth century, while resident at Avignon : and all contemporary accounts prove that he is not chargeable with having recurred in his picture to the poet’s license. “ You imagine,” he writes, in a letter to a friend, “ that the city of Avignon is the same now that it was when you resided in it. No — it is very different. It was then, it is true, the worst and vilest place on earth ; now it is become a terrestrial hell, an abode of fiends and devils, a receptacle of all that is most wicked and abominable. What I tell you is not from hearsay, but from my own knowledge and

experience. In this city there is no piety, no reverence or fear of God, no faith or charity, nothing that is holy, just, equitable, or humane. Why should I speak of truth, where not only the houses, palaces, courts, churches, and the thrones of Popes and cardinals, but the very earth and air, seem to teem with lies! A future state, heaven, hell, and judgment, are openly turned into ridicule, as childish fables. Good men have, of late, been treated with so much scorn and contempt, that there is not one left among them to be an object of their laughter." In the same letter, he declares that the more profligate a man was, the more certain he was of preferment in the Church.

It is no wonder that, amidst so deep a corruption of manners in those whose lives should be patterns to the other classes of society, the vices of the clergy were standing subjects of satire in every country of Europe, and especially in England, in the 14th century. The poems of Chaucer abound in passages of this kind, and the *Plowman's Tale* is one continued satire upon the clergy for their gross ignorance, cruelty, covetousness, simony, vanity, pride, ambition, drunkenness, gluttony, lechery, and other vices. This profligacy gave rise to an opinion, which universally prevailed, that the coming of Antichrist was at hand. We are told indeed that, in 1364, Dr. Nicholas Orem, a celebrated preacher, in a sermon before the Pope and cardinals, undertook to demonstrate this proposition, from the enormous corruption and the intolerable abuses of the Church. Even Petrarch, though not

scrupulous in regard to doctrines and ceremonies, was so shocked at the gross depravity of the papal court, that he applied that passage in the book of Revelations concerning Babylon, the mother of harlots and of all abominations, to the city of Avignon, where, as it has been observed, the Pope then resided.

The bold impugner of papal supremacy, meanwhile presented by the king to a canonry in the collegiate church of Westbury, and the living of Lutterworth in Leicestershire, could not hope long to escape the vengeance of those whose interest it was to support the prevailing errors. The clergy, alarmed at the diffusion of his principles, which threatened the overthrow of the Church of Rome, transmitted to Pope Gregory XI. eighteen propositions maintained by him as heretical. A bull, addressed to Sudbury, the primate of England, and Courtenay, bishop of London, commanded them to have him apprehended and kept in close custody till they should receive further instructions. A messenger was accordingly sent to Oxford, requiring the University, upon pain of the severest penalties, to deliver him up for justice. These threats were disregarded. The prelates, finding that they could not proceed against Wicklif in the summary manner directed by the Pope, summoned him to appear at St. Paul's, London, before a convocation, assembled to sit in judgment on himself and his doctrines.

Confident in his cause and his protectors, the intrepid reformer hesitated not to obey. Accompanied

by the duke of Lancaster and lord Percy, marshal of England, Wicklif repaired to St. Paul's; and, when ushered before the assembly, at which Courtenay presided, the duke desired him to be seated. The orthodox bishop would not allow that courtesy to a heretic. An altercation ensued, and the duke, who might be said to govern the kingdom, owing to the incapacity of his father, in the consciousness of his power, threatened to throw the bishop and his haughty colleagues out of the church. The people, taking the part of the prelates, rushed upon Lancaster and Percy, who narrowly escaped from their fury, and the meeting was broken up. The mansions of the duke and Percy were afterwards attacked and plundered by the populace.

With the report of this disappointment, the exasperated agents of the court of Rome transmitted fresh complaints to the pontiff. Gregory, in his alarm, issued, on the 22nd of May, 1377, no fewer than five bulls, three addressed to Sudbury and Courtenay, one to the University of Oxford, and another to the king himself, who were enjoined, by their hopes of salvation, to crush the daring innovator. A statement of his heretical doctrines was annexed. The prelates were commanded to examine Wicklif upon these articles, and, in case he should avow them, he was either to be apprehended, or they were to notify to him that he must appear at Rome within three months. The University deliberated long whether it should comply with the orders of the Pope, in expectation probably

that time might produce a fit opportunity for shewing its real sentiments : while the court took no notice of his exhortation to favour the proceedings against Wicklif.

In the following month, the death of Edward III. transferred the crown to his young grandson, Richard. The truce with France had expired, and Charles VI. was making serious preparations for recovering the provinces conquered by the late king. It now became a question with the government “ whether the kingdom of England, on an imminent necessity of its own defence, might not lawfully detain the treasure of the kingdom, that it be not carried out of the land, although the Lord Pope required it, on pain of censure and by virtue of the obedience due to him.” So high was the estimation in which Wicklif was still held, notwithstanding the influence of his enemies, that this question was referred to his decision. In his answer, he contended that it would be downright madness to waste the resources of the country upon foreigners, while the nation was sinking under the burdens of domestic taxation. Thus did Wicklif stand forward a second time as the public advocate of his sovereign and country.

The intrepidity with which he performed this office of course drew down upon him the indignation of the clergy. The archbishop sent him the propositions transmitted by the Pope, and cited him to appear at Lambeth palace early in 1378, to answer to the charge of heresy founded upon them. Wicklif

obeyed this mandate ; but a message from the mother of the young king, forbidding any definite sentence to be passed, led to his dismissal, with a strict injunction to abstain from repeating the heretical doctrines imputed to him, which, however, he defended in writing.

The most meritorious service rendered by Wicklif to his country was the production of a complete version of the Bible in the English language. It was made entirely from the Latin text ; and it is admitted that, aiming at scrupulous fidelity, his translation is so literal as to be sometimes obscure and even unintelligible. With what activity it was circulated may be inferred from the numerous manuscript copies which have survived the exterminating zeal of papal inquisitors. The appearance of such a work excited the deepest alarm and the fiercest indignation of the popish hierarchy. It was denounced and proscribed as little less than sacrilege, and the translator, as a profaner of the sanctity of truth, who with impious hand had dared to withdraw the veil which had for ages screened it from the gaze of the multitude. "In proof of his doctrines," says Lingard, the modern popish historian, in a tone of unusual moderation, "he appealed to the Scriptures, and thus made his disciples judges between him and the bishops. Men were flattered with the appeal to their private judgment : the new doctrines insensibly acquired protectors and partisans in the higher classes, who alone were acquainted with the use of

letters ; a spirit of inquiry was generated ; and the seeds were sown of that religious revolution, which, in little more than a century, astonished and convulsed the nations of Europe."

Undaunted by the fiery zeal of his enemies, Wicklif continued to expose with energy the errors and corruptions of Popery. In 1381, he produced an exposition of the intent and purpose of the Lord's Supper, as instituted by its founder, and, of course, demolished the doctrine of transubstantiation, which the papists had made the grand touchstone of their faith. The most active measures were immediately taken for punishing so dire an offence. Barton, vice-chancellor of the university of Oxford, a sworn foe to all innovation, insisted on his abjuring this and other heretical opinions on pain of imprisonment and excommunication. Relying on the support of Lancaster, he appealed direct to the king himself. The duke, however, whose former patronage appears to have been afforded from political motives alone, regarded the point in dispute as of too critical a nature, and declined to interfere.

Courtenay, who had succeeded Sudbury in the primacy, and was inflamed by a fiercer spirit of persecution than his predecessor, was no sooner invested with his new dignity than he summoned Wicklif to appear before him on the 17th of May, 1382. The reformer refused obedience to this mandate, alleging that he was not amenable to any other jurisdiction than the University. The archbishop then convoked

his diocesans to pronounce upon the blasphemous and pernicious doctrines imputed to Wicklif and his followers. Scarcely had they commenced their proceedings, when a violent earthquake shook the Dominican convent in which they had met to its very foundations. Inexpressible consternation seized the assembly, most of the members interpreting the event into a token of the displeasure of Heaven with the object of their meeting. Courtenay gradually mustered courage, his detestation of heresy getting the better of his fears, and assured his timid brethren that the earthquake was certainly an expression of the Divine wrath, not against that holy assembly which was engaged in the cause of God, but against the heretics, on whom they were sitting in judgment. He then laid before them the twenty-four propositions, alleged to have been publicly propounded by Wicklif, which were condemned partly as heretical, partly as erroneous. Instructions were instantly despatched to the bishops of London and Lincoln, enjoining them to prevent the dissemination of those doctrines by all the means in their power.

The measures of the primate were seconded by the spiritual lords in parliament, who united in a petition that a remedy might be provided against the innumerable errors and impieties of the Lollards, as the followers of Wicklif were denominated. A royal ordinance was in consequence issued, authorising sheriffs to apprehend persons preaching without the license of the ordinary, and to detain them

in prison till they should justify themselves according to law and reason of Holy Church. This first penal enactment in our statute book was entered in the Roll of Parliament, though it had not the assent of either lords or commons. In the next session, the commons complained to the king that it had been passed without their concurrence, and prayed that it might be annulled, as it was not their intention to bind themselves to the bishops more than their ancestors had been bound in times past. Though the king assented with apparent willingness to the petition, this spurious statute was not erased, but "still remains among our laws," says Hallam, "unrepealed, except by desuetude and by inference from acts of much later times." Unfortunately, it had, in a great measure, done its office, and given a powerful impulse to the work of religious persecution.*

Wicklif's judges, aware of his popularity and fearful of exciting commotion, were content with obtaining from the king an order for his banishment from the University of Oxford. He likewise commanded diligent search to be made for his writings, and all persons in whose possession any of them should be found to be expelled from the city. The Reformer was consequently obliged to quit the most illustrious scene of his warfare, and retired to his living at Lutterworth, where he completed his translation of

* Le Bas, Life of Wicklif.

the Bible, and performed, in the most exemplary manner, the duties of a parish priest so long as his health permitted.

But, if the English persecutors of Wicklif suffered him to terminate his career in peace, the Romish Church had not forgotten the rude shock which it had received from this humble but formidable adversary. Exasperated also, no doubt, by the eagerness with which, in spite of prohibitions and penalties, the books of the Reformer were sought after, Pope Urban VI. transmitted to him a summons to appear before him at Rome, to defend himself against the charge of heretical doctrines. Disabled in body for such a journey, his reply, containing a brief exposition of the chief articles of his faith, and an excuse for not complying with the papal mandate, showed that his mind retained its wonted energy. A second attack, while attending mass in his own church, proved fatal; and, on the 31st of December, 1384, a peaceful death removed him in his 61st year from all further persecution. In the popish clergy, his disease and death produced the most indecent exultation: they were ascribed to the immediate vengeance of Heaven for his heresy. "On the day of St. Thomas the Martyr, archbishop of Canterbury," says Walsingham, "that limb of the devil, enemy of the Church, deceiver of the people, idol of heretics, mirror of hypocrites, author of schism, sower of hatred, and inventor of lies, John Wickliff, was, by the immediate judgment of God, suddenly struck

with a palsy, which seized all the members of his body, when he was ready (as they say) to vomit forth his blasphemies against the blessed St. Thomas in a sermon which he had prepared to preach that day."

In 1415, thirty years after the decease of Wicklif, the council of Constance, which doomed itself to everlasting infamy by the murder of John Huss, in violation of the imperial promise of safety, vented its impotent rage on the memory of our first English Reformer; by branding his writings with the mark of heresy. An order was at the same time issued, that "his body and bones, if they might be discerned and known from the bodies of other faithful people, should be taken from the ground and thrown far away from the burial of any church, according to the canon laws and decrees." In pursuance of this mandate, but not till thirteen years after it was pronounced, the grave was opened, under the direction of Fleming, bishop of Lincoln, who from a zealous adherent of Wicklif's had become a merciless persecutor of his doctrines. The remains of the Reformer were disinterred and burned, and his ashes thrown into the adjoining rivulet, called the Swift.

The joy of the clergy on the death of their formidable adversary was not of long duration. They soon perceived with alarm that his doctrines had not died with him. Taking example from the Mendicant orders, whose zeal had tended to strengthen the papal power so materially, Wicklif had encouraged

preachers, called in his later writings Poor Priests, to disseminate his doctrines throughout the whole kingdom. They resembled the friars, excepting in one point—they did not beg—though it is to be presumed that they must have depended for subsistence on the contributions of their hearers. Traveling about on foot, in plain frieze gowns, they declaimed with great vehemence against the corruptions of the Church and the vices of the clergy, and were admired and followed not only by the common people, but by several persons of high rank and great power. It was undoubtedly these humble apostles of Reformation, who were aimed at in the preamble to the ordinance of 1382, under the description of persons affecting peculiar sanctity and simplicity of manners, and exercising their irregular ministration in the fairs and markets, as well as in the churches and churchyards throughout the kingdom.

Knyghton, a contemporary historian of the best credit, but a stanch papist, acknowledges that, as Wicklif excelled all the learned men of his age in disputation, so his followers in a very short time became eloquent preachers and powerful disputants; and, with genuine Catholic candour, he ascribes their talents to supernatural agency, alleging that they were acquired by the assistance of the Devil, who took possession of them when they became Lollards. Be this as it may, through the zeal, activity, and eloquence of these preachers, the new doctrines, as they were called, gained ground so fast that, according to

the writer just quoted, "more than one half of the people of England in a few years became Lollards."

While these missionaries were proclaiming to the lowly the doctrines of the Reformer, Wicklif's writings and his character were gaining access for them among the very highest classes. We have seen that in John of Gaunt, he had a stanch protector, whether from political or religious motives it is impossible to decide, till his dispute with the Church began to assume a theological character; and the important affairs in which he was employed by Edward III. attest that he enjoyed the personal favour of that sovereign. We have seen the mother of Richard II. interesting herself for his safety, when the arm of ecclesiastical power was raised to crush him: and as for his queen, daughter of the emperor Charles IV., who for many years after her death was called "the good queen Anne," her whole life and habits were such as to afford effective sanction to the labours of Wicklif. Her diligent study of the Scriptures was a principal theme of commendation in the sermon delivered at her funeral by archbishop Arundel. "Although a stranger," he said, "yet she constantly studied the four Gospels in English, with the expositions of the doctors; and in the study of these and the perusal of godly books, she displayed more diligence than the prelates themselves, although it was required of them by their office and calling." Among the nobility and gentry also, Wicklif and his followers found many steady supporters, among whom

the most conspicuous was Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, who by his cruel death at the stake attested his unflinching adherence to the doctrines of the Reformer.

It was not in England alone that those doctrines were eagerly and extensively embraced by persons of all ranks. On the continent, and especially in Bohemia, they were widely disseminated. It is probable that the attendants of the queen of Richard II., on their return after her decease, carried back with them many portions of Wicklif's writings to their own country, where their effects were indeed more rapid and striking than at home. It is related that, on their condemnation as heretical, no fewer than two hundred of his books, many of them, finely written and richly bound and adorned, were committed to the flames by the bishop of Prague; and it was for their profession of the doctrines contained in them that John Huss and Jerome of Prague were consigned at Constance to the like fate.

Rejecting the fanciful derivations ascribed by Southey and other writers to the name assigned to the English followers of Wicklif's principles, I have no hesitation to adopt the origin attributed to that appellation by the spiritual head of the Vaudois Church, who positively asserted, as I shall hereafter have occasion to show, that it was borrowed from Lollard, one of the missionaries of the ancient Waldenses, who, according to their records, travelled to various parts of Europe, is said to have visited Eng-

land, and was burned in 1350 at Cologne, of course for heresy. The close resemblance of their doctrines to those taught by Wicklif and his disciples is indisputable; and it is equally certain that there were religious societies in the north of Germany and the Netherlands, who bore the designation of Lollards, before Wicklif began to promulgate his opinions in this country.

It was not long after the decease of the English Reformer that the Popish hierarchy, alarmed at the dangers with which the rapid dissemination of his principles threatened their Church, exerted their utmost efforts to suppress them. At their instigation, a commission was issued in 1387, for the seizure of all the "little books" written by him and his followers. It was empowered to forbid all persons of whatever degree to read those pernicious writings, or to support the scandalous doctrines contained in them, on pain of forfeiture and imprisonment; and letters patent to the same effect were despatched to commissioners in most of the counties of England.

The contests between the king and parliament of England and the court of Rome still continued, and led to the enactment, in 1392, of a very severe law for the punishment of persons who should solicit or bring into the kingdom any papal bulls of excommunication, translation, or other thing against the rights and dignity of the Crown. Emboldened by measures of such decisive character, and probably by their increasing numbers also, the Lollards presented

to a parliament, held in 1394, at Westminster, by the duke of York—the king being then absent in Ireland—a remonstrance, containing twelve articles against the Church and the clergy. They complained chiefly of the exorbitant power, excessive wealth, and profligate lives of the clergy, ascribing the latter chiefly to their vows of celibacy; of transubstantiation and the superstitious practices arising from the belief of it; of prayers for the dead; of the worship of images; of pilgrimages; of auricular confession and its consequences; and of several other points on which the present Protestants differ from the Romish Church. What reception this remonstrance met with we are not informed.

About the same time, the Lollards published several satirical papers, painting the deceitful arts, abominable vices, and absurd opinions of the clergy, in very strong colours, which excited both the contempt and the hatred of the people against them. Some of these papers, written with great asperity and considerable wit, were pasted up in most of the public places in London and Westminster. At these bold proceedings, the prelates felt, or affected to feel, extreme alarm. The archbishop of York and the bishop of London were despatched with other messengers to the king, to beseech him to hasten his return, and save the Church and Catholic faith from the dangers with which it was threatened. Richard accordingly repaired to London. Summoning before him several persons of distinction who were known

to favour the Lollards, he commanded them, on pain of his severest displeasure, to withdraw their protection from those seditious sectaries. One of them, Sir Robert Stury, who was a particular object of his indignation, he compelled to abjure the tenets of the Lollards, and swore that, if he failed to keep his oath, he should suffer an ignominious death. The zeal of the king and the prelates was further inflamed by an epistle from Pope Boniface IX., urging the latter to exterminate the professors of doctrines subversive of the State, both civil and ecclesiastical, and exhorting Richard to strengthen the hands of the clergy with all the aids of the secular power.

Even Protestant writers have ventured to assert that the clergy had considerable ground for complaint. "The abuse heaped upon them by the Lollards," says Le Bas, "was not only furious but indiscriminate: and, besides, the Reformers would probably have suffered little to remain untouched if they had been left entirely to their own impulses. Cathedrals, abbeys, and monasteries might have fallen before them: all endowments might have been swept away: and there was no inconsiderable danger lest piety itself should have been rendered almost hateful by the unsocial austerity which was beginning to furrow the countenance and to cloud the brow of their religion. In addition to this, it can scarcely be denied that the whole fabric of society was in some danger from their principles. There is reason to believe that by many of them the reign of the saints upon earth was

eagerly anticipated ; and that their impatience, if not effectively curbed, might have broken out into wild and fearful commotion.”*

All these surmises, for they are nothing more, are evidently founded on the representations of these early Reformers given us by advocates of unmitigated popery ; and lead to the conclusion that they should rather have been repressed as traitors or incendiaries, than persecuted as heretics. “The hierarchy, however,” continues the writer just quoted, “preferred the latter course, and fixed upon the most absurd of all the Romish dogmas as the test of heresy. The murderous question by which they brought their inquisitions to an issue was always, ‘Do you or do you not believe that material bread remains in the sacrament, after the words of consecration have been uttered?’ and, if the answer was in the affirmative, nothing remained for the delinquent but a death of excruciating anguish. The immediate effect of such proceedings was that the Lollards were regarded not as suffering the penalty due to revolutionary opinions and practices, but as martyrs in the cause of scriptural truth ; and a sentiment of abhorrence was gradually excited against the clergy as monsters of inhumanity and injustice.”

The odious distinction of being the first English monarch to countenance these barbarities was reserved for Henry IV., son of John of Gaunt, who, before he wrested the crown from the head of his

* Le Bas, *Life of Wicklif*, p. 413.

cousin Richard, appeared disposed to favour the opinions of the Lollards. On ascending the throne, sensible of the defectiveness of his title, he deemed it good policy to strengthen his authority by securing the support of a body possessing such power and influence as the clergy. He had no scruple, therefore, to assist the prelates in kindling the flames of religious persecution.

He had scarcely ascended the throne, when, with this view, he sent the earl of Northumberland to a convocation of the province of Canterbury, assembled in October, 1399, in the Chapter-house of St. Paul's, with a message well adapted to attach the prelates to his interest. "I come not," said the earl, "like the commissioners of former kings, to demand your money, but to assure you that my royal master will never demand money from his clergy but in cases of extreme necessity. I come most earnestly to beg the prayers of the Church for the king and kingdom, and to promise that he will protect the clergy in all their liberties and immunities, and assist them with all his power in exterminating heretics." The first of these promises was soon forgotten; for no king of England ever made such frequent demands of money from his clergy as Henry IV., when once firmly established on the throne; the second was but too faithfully performed.

Arundel, the primate, who, while archbishop of York, had been a cruel persecutor of the Lollards, finding himself now not only possessed of extended

power, but supported by that of the crown, determined to show them no mercy. He and his clergy, therefore, applied to the parliament, which met at Westminster in 1400, representing that persons who had no authority from any bishop preached heretical doctrines, published heretical books, and taught heresies and errors in the schools, and praying the parliament to provide a remedy against these innovations. So strenuously was this application seconded by Henry and the peers, that a law was passed, authorising the bishop to imprison all persons suspected of heresy, to try them in the spiritual court, and, if they were convicted of being either obstinate or relapsed heretics, they were, after condemnation, to be delivered over to the secular power, to be publicly burned in some elevated place, to strike terror into others.

The first victim of this inhuman law, which for two centuries and a half disgraced our statute book, was William Sautré, parish priest of St. Osyth's in the city of London, and formerly of St. Margaret's at Lynn, Norfolk. While residing at the latter place, he had been summoned before the bishop of Norwich to answer for his religious opinions; and, shrinking from the prospect of a cruel death, he had endeavoured to explain away his supposed errors. The bishop insisted that he had formally abjured. On the 24th of May, 1400, he was brought before the convocation assembled at the Chapter-house of St. Paul's, charged with eight articles of heresy, and with having maintained them subsequently to his abjura-

tion before the bishop of Norwich. The first question on which he was examined by Arundel related to the popish doctrine of the real presence in the eucharist. Persisting in the denial of his belief in it, he was pronounced by the archbishop an incorrigible heretic. This being the first sacrifice offered on the altar of the mass, it was conducted with scrupulous formality, as a precedent in future cases. The offender was degraded from all his functions in succession, from the order of priest to that of sexton. The cap of a layman was then placed on his head, and he was delivered up to the secular power, with the hypocritical injunction to deal kindly with him, and at the same time with a perfect knowledge that all the kindness they could show was to commit him to the flames. He was burned in Smithfield, "and, for the first time in England," concludes Le Bas, "did the flame of persecution ascend towards heaven, to outrage the God of love and mercy."

The barbarous sacrifice of so respectable a clergyman produced indeed the intended effect: it struck terror into the followers of Wicklif, and caused many of them to conceal their opinions in order to preserve their lives. Others, when brought to trial, shrunk from the prospect of the most horrible of deaths, and pretended to renounce their opinions: hence it was several years before another was found with fortitude sufficient to endure the fiery ordeal. In secret, however, great multitudes in all parts of England, particularly in London, Oxford, Shrews-

bury, Norfolk, and Lincolnshire, continued to adhere to the doctrines of the Reformer.

Meanwhile, Arundel, as superstitious as he was cruel, increased the number of holidays, and appointed additional devotions to be paid to the Virgin Mary, to whose especial patronage he ascribed the national prosperity, and especially that revolution which had restored him to his See. One long-prevailing abuse also, it is true, he attempted to correct, by prohibiting the practice of holding fairs and markets in churchyards on Sundays, except in harvest-time, when it was thought to be necessary.

In 1407, William Thorpe, a clergyman of extraordinary learning for that age, a disciple of Wicklif's, who had preached his doctrine, in spite of imprisonment, in different parts of England, was apprehended by the magistrates of Shrewsbury, and sent to archbishop Arundel. Before him and three of the most learned of his clergy, Thorpe underwent a long examination, of which he wrote a detailed account. His antagonists, finding him an over-match for them at disputation, strove to shake his constancy by promises, and, these failing, by threats. The primate, who was much addicted to profane swearing, declared in his rage, with many terrible oaths, that "he would pursue him and all his sect so closely as not to leave one slip in the land." One of the assistant priests charitably told him that, unless he recanted, he should be cursed, degraded, burnt, and damned; and another proposed to throw him into the sea. A course

milder in appearance was adopted by the archbishop, who consigned him to a loathsome prison, the horrors of which had conquered the fortitude of several other Lollards, and here probably Thorpe died, as history makes no further mention of him.

In 1403, the king being straitened for money to prosecute his expedition into Wales, some of the barons proposed to him to seize the money and plate of certain rich prelates who were in the army, in order to supply his necessities. The primate, who was present, denounced such threats against all who should presume to invade the property of the Church, that the scheme was not adopted. In the following year, when the parliament met at Coventry, a supply was demanded from the commons. They represented to the king, by their speaker, that they were reduced by frequent taxes and personal service to great poverty, and could not afford a supply, while the clergy wallowed in wealth; and it was therefore but reasonable that some of their riches should be taken to relieve the necessities of the State. Alarmed at this suggestion, the primate fell upon his knees before the king, and conjured him to remember his coronation oath, by which he engaged to protect the Church in all her privileges and immunities. The king desired him to rise, and go to his place, assuring him that he would defend the Church in all her possessions, and leave her richer than he found her. The peers fell in with the king's sentiments, and the commons were not only obliged to abandon their proposal, but to beg pardon for their presumption.

Several laws were, however, enacted in this reign against the oppressive exactions in which the court of Rome still persevered ; but they proved as inefficacious as those formerly made against that enormous evil.

In January, 1409, Arundel held, at St. Paul's, a convention of the prelates of his province, in which thirteen canons, or constitutions, were made. In the preamble to these canons, it was declared to be the most horrible of all crimes to dispute any of the doctrines, or to disobey any of the decrees, promulgated by the Pope, " who carried the keys of eternal life and eternal death, who was the vicegerent, not of a mere man, but of the true God on earth ; and to whom God had committed the government of the kingdom of heaven." " This," observes Henry,* " was rather strong language, especially at a time when there were two Popes who had sent one another to the devil, and were both declared contumacious heretics by the council of Pisa, in that same year." The object of Arundel's constitutions was to extirpate Lollardry, as the doctrines of Wicklif were then called.

Soon after the publication of these canons, another example of severity was exhibited. This second victim was Thomas Badby, a tailor in the diocese of Worcester. In January, 1410, having been tried and convicted of heresy by the bishop of that see, he was sent, with a copy of his trial and sentence, to the

* Hist. of Great Brit. x. 8.

primate. His crime was refusal to believe in the doctrine of the real presence in the eucharist. The primate pressed him earnestly to believe as the Church did, declaring that, if he complied, "he would gage his soul for him at the day of judgment." Adhering stedfastly to his faith, Badby was pronounced an obstinate heretic, and the archbishop delivered him to the secular magistrates, with the mock-exhortation "not to put him to death." In the afternoon of the same day he was taken to Smithfield, placed on a large tun, and chained to a stake, with faggots piled around him. Before the fire was kindled, the prince of Wales rode up to the pile, and earnestly entreated Badby to save his life, promising him a provision for his future support, if he would renounce his opinions. The poor man, with many expressions of the warmest gratitude to the prince, declared that he firmly believed his opinions to be true, and that he could not renounce them, even to escape so terrible a death. The prior of St. Bartholomew's then came forth, bringing the host, before which were borne twelve burning tapers. It was presented to the offender, and he was asked what he believed it to be; he replied, that it was hallowed bread, not God's body. The pile was then fired. Affected by his piteous cries for mercy, whether addressed to God or man, the prince, under the idea that the pain had overcome his fortitude, ordered the flames to be quenched, and renewed his intreaties to him to recant. This humble confessor was not to

be shaken; he refused to deny the convictions of his conscience; the fire was rekindled; and he expired, calling upon Christ to receive his soul.

Ever since the death of Wicklif, his doctrines had continued to prevail in the University where they were first promulgated, more than in any other part of England. This was a frequent subject of complaint to archbishop Arundel, who alleged that "Oxford was as a vine that brought forth wild and sour grapes, which being eaten by the fathers, the teeth of the children were set on edge; so that the whole province of Canterbury was tainted with novel and damnable Lollardism, to the intolerable and notorious scandal of the University." He says, on another occasion, "She who was formerly the mother of virtues, the prop of the Catholic faith, the singular pattern of obedience, now brings forth only abortive or degenerate children, who encourage contumacy and rebellion, and sow tares among the pure wheat."

Bent on the extermination of the obnoxious doctrines, the primate, in 1411, set out with a numerous retinue for Oxford. On his approach, however, he was met by the chancellor and the proctors, who intimated that, if he came only to take a view of their colleges, he should be received and entertained with all the respect due to his high dignity; but, if he came on a visitation, as they were exempted from that by several papal bulls, he could not be admitted. Incensed at this repulse, Arundel appealed to the king, who, after hearing both parties, pro-

nounced a definitive sentence in favour of the archbishop. He now commanded the University to appoint twelve of its most learned and orthodox members to examine the writings of Wicklif, and to extract such opinions as appeared to them heretical or erroneous. The mandate was obeyed, and the examiners found no fewer than 267 conclusions, which they declared to be partly heretical, partly erroneous. These were transmitted to the primate, who sent them to the Pope, urging him to condemn them, and to grant him authority to take the body of their author out of the grave, and throw it on a dunghill, that it might be trampled on by all Christians. The Pope condemned Wicklif's opinions, but refused to sanction the disturbance of his remains.

The appetite for blood, once excited, began to long for nobler victims. In 1413, Arundel convened a synod of all the bishops and clergy of England at St. Paul's, at which twelve inquisitors, appointed in the preceding year at Oxford to search out heretics, heresy, and Wicklif's books, presented the conclusions collected from those books as heretical. They alleged, that Christ's vesture without seam could not be made whole again, unless certain great men who protected the disciples of Wicklif were removed, and particularly specified Sir John Oldcastle, who, in right of his wife, was Lord Cobham. Distinguished on many occasions by valour and military talents, he had won the esteem both of the late king, and of Henry V., who had just succeeded his father. His

high rank and character, his zeal for the detested doctrines of Wicklif, and his patronage of the preachers of them, pointed him out to Arundel as a fit object of ecclesiastical vengeance.

As Cobham was known to be in favour with the king, it was thought prudent to learn his sentiments before any proceedings were commenced. Accordingly, the primate, accompanied by the bishops, repaired to Kennington, where the king was then residing, and accused Cobham of holding heretical opinions concerning the sacrament, penance, pilgrimages, the adoration of images, and the authority of the Romish church; and they declared their intention of proceeding against him as a pestilent heretic. Henry, a prince of noble but implacable nature, who knew and admired the high qualities of Cobham, recommended gentle measures, and promised the prelates to commune himself with him on the subject of their charges.

The king, having summoned him into his presence, exhorted him to submit to his mother, the holy Church, and to acknowledge his errors. Cobham professed the most dutiful obedience to his sovereign, but declared that he neither owed suit, service, nor allegiance to the Pope: on which Henry authorised the prelates to proceed against him in their own way.

On the same day that Cobham appeared before the king at Kennington, a great number of books written by Wicklif and others of his sect were burned at St.

Paul's Cross, the archbishop preaching to the people, and stating the reasons for the conflagration. Among these volumes was one containing several small tracts, tending, as Arundel's Register relates, to the subversion of the faith and of holy Church, which had been lying at a limner's in Paternoster Row, for the purpose of being illuminated. The artist, being apprehended, confessed that the book was lord Cobham's. The meeting at Kennington was, it seems, a very full one; almost all the prelates and nobles of England being present. Certain extracts made by the clergy from lord Cobham's volume were read aloud. The king manifested great abhorrence of them; he asked the owner why he kept and read a book of that kind; and Cobham replied that, so far from having been in the habit of making use of it, he had not read more than two or three leaves.

Cobham, confiding probably in his popularity, rank, and strength, retired to his favourite residence, Cowling Castle, near Rochester. Thither the bishops despatched a citation requiring his appearance before them. As it was understood that any attempt to serve this process personally would be made at the risk of life, the sumner was afraid to perform his errand. Letters citatory were therefore twice posted on the great gates of Rochester cathedral, and twice torn down and destroyed. Arundel excommunicated the contumacious offender; cited him afresh, threatening in case of further disobedience to proceed to extremities; and called upon the secular power, on

pain of the censures of the Church, to aid it against this seditious apostate, schismatic, heretic, and disturber of the peace of the realm.

Relying on the righteousness of his cause, Cobham now drew up a paper, entitled "The Christian Belief of the lord Cobham," which he presented to the king, in expectation, it is said, of finding mercy and favour at his hand. It commenced with the apostles' creed, to which was added a fuller exposition of his faith. He begged the king to submit this confession to the wisest and most learned men of the realm, that, in case it should be found in all points agreeable to the truth, he might be held for a true Christian; or, if otherwise, that it might be utterly condemned, provided that he were taught a better belief by the Word of God, which word he would always most reverently obey. Henry refused to receive this paper, and directed him to deliver it to those who were to be his judges.

Cobham then desired to be allowed to clear himself from the imputation of heresy, according to the ancient principle of law, by the oath of a hundred knights and squires, who would come forward in his behalf. The new ecclesiastical law having superseded all feudal forms, this application was of course disregarded; and with as little success did the high-spirited noble, in accordance with the laws and manners of that age, offer to fight for life or death, in defence of his faith, with any man living, Christian or heathen, the king and the lords of his

council alone excepted. When, however, Henry suffered him to be personally cited in his presence, Cobham, perceiving that he had no support to expect from the king, refused to acknowledge the archbishop as his judge, and appealed from him to the Pope. This appeal, evidently made for the purpose of gaining time, was disallowed; and he was committed to the Tower till the day fixed for his examination.

This examination took place in the Chapter House of St. Paul's. The only persons present besides the primate were the bishops of London and Winchester, and the lieutenant of the Tower. Arundel informed the prisoner that, having in the last general convocation been found guilty of various heresies, and cited for his rebellious contumacy in not appearing, he had been both privately and publicly excommunicated. Still, if he would meekly ask for absolution, it would not be denied. Cobham, drawing a paper from his bosom, replied that, with the permission of the assembly, he would read to them a declaration of the faith which he held, and to which he was determined to adhere. It contained his profession on the four points on which the charges against him were chiefly founded. Being urged for further explanation, he declined to say any thing in addition to what was expressed in that paper, and was in consequence remanded to the Tower.

One day only, being Sunday, was suffered to intervene, before he was again brought up, but this time

before a numerous assembly, including the heads and leading persons of the various orders of friars, convened to sit in judgment on him at the Dominican convent within Ludgate. A multitude of priests, monks, and underlings, collected as spectators, insulted him as he came for an execrable heretic and a man accursed before God. The taunts of the brutal audience, exulting in the anticipation of the inhuman catastrophe, disturbed the equanimity which he had hitherto maintained, and produced in him "an emotion, than which," says Southey, in his abridgment of Fox's prolix narrative, "nothing nobler in its kind hath been imagined in fiction or recorded in history." When Arundel opened the tragedy by offering absolution and mercy, if he would humbly desire it in due form and manner ordained by the Church, he replied, "Nay, forsooth, will I not, for I never yet trespassed against you, and therefore I will not do it." Then, falling upon his knees on the floor, and raising his folded hands toward heaven, he burst forth into this impassioned exclamation: "I shrive me here unto Thee, my eternal, living God, that in my youth I offended Thee, O Lord, most grievously, in pride, wrath, and gluttony, in covetousness and in lechery! Many men have I hurt in mine anger, and done many other horrible sins. Good Lord, I ask Thee mercy!" He wept while uttering this passionate prayer; then, rising, said with a mighty voice, "Lo! good people, lo! for the breaking of God's law and his commandments they never yet

cursed me ! But for their own laws and traditions, most cruelly do they handle both me and other men. And, therefore, both they and their laws, by the promise of God, shall be utterly destroyed."

When the assembly had somewhat recovered from the surprise excited by this awful appeal, Arundel began to examine him concerning his belief. With the same undaunted spirit as ever, he replied, "I believe fully and faithfully in the universal laws of God. I believe all that is contained in the sacred Scriptures of the Bible to be true. Finally, I believe all that my Lord God would that I should believe." Whatever might be the effect of this faith for the salvation of the soul, it was not sufficient, under Popish domination, to save the body of him who professed it from the flames. The prisoner was then urged to declare his belief respecting the eucharist; and, on his refusal to deviate from his recorded opinions on that and other points, the archbishop "modestly, mildly, and sweetly," as he says himself, pronounced sentence, and committed him as a pernicious and detestable heretic to the secular power, to do him thereupon to death.

The victim was again remanded to the Tower; and it is related that a respite of fifty days was granted at Arundel's desire. During this interval, a fabricated abjuration was put forth in his name. With the aid of his friends, Cobham exposed this artifice, declaring, in bills which were posted in different parts of the metropolis, that he had never varied from the

confession made by him before the clergy, and which he had taken care to get published at the time. Before the respite expired, the prisoner contrived, by what means we know not, to escape from the Tower.

All writers agree that the subsequent transactions are inexplicably mysterious. To me, I must confess, they wear all the appearance of a scheme devised by the clergy and their partisans to force the government into more active measures for crushing the detested Lollards. It was alleged that these heretics had formed a plot for murdering the king and his brothers at Eltham. Henry immediately returned to Westminster, and was then told that they were assembling from all quarters in the fields behind St. Giles's, whence they were to start at a certain hour under lord Cobham, to burn the Abbey, St. Paul's, St. Alban's, and all the friaries in London. The king, to anticipate their designs, ordered his friends to arm, and proceeded in the middle of a December night to the place mentioned, where he found only a few persons, who, being asked what they wanted there, answered, the lord Cobham. It was further asserted that, had not precaution been taken to guard the city gates, these people were to have been joined by 50,000 servants and apprentices. On behalf of the persons found in the fields, it is asserted that they had met for the purpose of religious worship, because they could not assemble without danger by day: but, as Southey observes, "con-

sidering the season of the year, this tale is as little credible as the other." That writer seems disposed to believe that a conspiracy might have been formed for raising the rightful family to the throne, and that the Lollards had embarked in it as a party, in the hope of obtaining toleration at least, if not the triumph of their doctrines; but he has the candour to admit that "on these points there is no evidence whatever."

Walsingham, a furious partisan of Popery, be it remembered, indeed relates that the Lollards fixed placards to the doors of the Churches in London, declaring that a hundred thousand strong arms were ready to enforce their opinions, adding that they were instigated to these proceedings by lord Cobham: but it is justly remarked by Sharon Turner, in reference to the statements of this chronicler, that "it is all a series of surmise and rumour, of alarm and anticipation. That any plot was formed there is no evidence; and the probability is that artful measures were taken to alarm the mind of the king into anger and cruelty, by charges of treason and rebellion, and meditated assassination."*

The placards mentioned by Walsingham may probably have been nothing more than the declaration which lord Cobham had caused to be published, magnified by the chronicler into seditious manifestoes. At any rate, the circumstances of that nobleman at

* Hist. Engl. pt. iii. c. vii. p. 308.

the time, and his known loyalty and honour, are sufficient to absolve him from all participation in an insurrectionary movement.

If this affair really was, as I conjecture, an artful contrivance of the Romanists to sharpen the persecution of their religious adversaries, it produced the effect. Universal alarm was excited. The prisons of London were filled; and thirty-nine persons, the principal of whom was Sir Roger Acton, who is described as a man of superior abilities and large possessions, were suspended by chains erected in Ficket Field, St. Giles's, and burned alive for heresy and treason. By royal proclamation, a large sum was offered to any one who should take lord Cobham, alive or dead; and the triumph of the clergy was crowned in 1415, by the passing of a statute, at the instigation of Chicheley, who had succeeded Arundel, in the primacy by which all persons holding civil offices, from the chancellor downward, were required to take an oath for the suppression of Lollardy. The preamble alleges that great rumours, congregations, and insurrections had been raised in the realm of England by divers liege subjects of the king, as well by those who belonged to the heretical sect called Lollardie, as by others of their confederacy, excitation, and abetment, with a view to annul and subvert the Christian faith and the law of God in this kingdom; also to destroy our sovereign lord the king himself, and all manner of estates of this realm, as well spiritual as temporal, and more-

over all manner of policy, and finally all the laws of the land.

Chicheley, whose words these virtually were, "must have been conscious," says Le Bas, that he was putting a gross and cruel falsehood into the mouth of parliament, for the purpose of heaping infamy on Lollardism and on the memory of Wicklif. The records of their persecution are wholly silent on the subject of sedition or conspiracy. Religious heresy is the crime for which they suffered, not political incendiarism. They were not gibbeted for compassing the king's death, or contriving the destruction of the civil institutions of the kingdom; they were burned alive for refusing to affirm that [no material bread remains in the Eucharist after certain syllables have been pronounced over it by the priest.]"*

In the same year, 1415, the University of Oxford drew up, at the king's command, a statement of abuses in the Church that needed reformation, to be laid before the council of Constance. It comprehends forty-six articles, and, though composed by clergymen, gives a most odious picture of the ecclesiastics of that time, particularly in regard to their avarice and debauchery. "It is notorious," says Article 27, "that when a Pagan or a Jew, abandoning his former errors, desires to be purified in the holy fount of baptism, all his temporal goods are confiscated to the Church; which, it is believed, pre-

* Life of Wicklif, 418.

vents many Jews from being baptised. It would be pious and meritorious in the council to remedy this abuse. For when Philip baptized the eunuch, he did not seize his chariot or the other goods he had about him at his baptism." Article 37 alleges that "the carnal and debauched lives of the clergy in our days, and their public fornications, which are never punished (except perhaps by a small fine in private) set an evil example before others: it would therefore be a holy thing and contribute to the reformation of the Church, if priests of every rank and order who were public fornicators were obliged to abstain from celebrating mass for a limited time."

In the eyes of the rulers of the Church, these were venial peccadilloes in comparison with the mortal crime of heresy: the extirpation of Lollardism continued, therefore, to be the grand object of their efforts. In August, 1415, John Claydon, a furrier in London, was brought as a relapsed heretic, together with some English books found in his house, before several bishops and doctors. He acknowledged that he had been long suspected of Lollardry, imprisoned for it two years in Conway Castle, and three years in the Fleet, and that he had abjured it before the primate. The mayor, who produced the books that had been found in Claydon's possession, described one of them, *The Lantern of Light*, as the vilest and most perverse book he had ever seen. Three of the prisoner's own servants, brought forward to give evidence against him, deposed that they had often heard peo-

ple read that and other books to their master, for he could not read himself, and that he seemed to be highly delighted with what he heard. The doctors appointed to examine these books reported that they were full of heresies, and that the Lantern of Light contained no fewer than fifteen. The archbishop condemned the books to be burned; their owner was pronounced a relapsed heretic, and doomed to the same fate.

The measure of these iniquities was filled up by the following constitution made by archbishop Chicheley in 1416. It enjoined "all suffragans and archdeacons, with their officials and commissaries, to make inquisition twice in every year, after persons suspected of heresy. Wherever reputed heretics were reported to dwell, three or more of the most respectable inhabitants of the parish were compelled to take an oath that they would certify in writing to the suffragans, or their officers, twice every year, what persons were heretics, who kept private conventicles, who differed in life and manners from the common conversation of the faithful, who had suspected books in the vulgar tongue, or were conversant with persons suspected of error. On such information, process was to issue against the accused, who were to be delivered over to the secular court, or to be imprisoned till the next convocation."

By this infernal ordinance, the horrors of the writ for burning heretics were completed. It set up an inquisition in every parish. It spread terror

and distrust in every family. Every dwelling was haunted by discord and suspicion, so that a man's bitterest foes were often of his own household and blood; and the fruits of this flagitious system were that multitudes were consigned to the dungeon or the stake by the treachery or the weakness of their nearest kindred or their dearest connections. Lord Cobham, after his escape from the Tower, contrived to elude his persecutors for four years, though all who harboured him became liable to the same penalties as himself. At length, Lord Powis, whether from love of gain, says Fox, or hatred to the reformed doctrine, affecting great friendship for lord Cobham, seized an opportunity to secure him. He defended himself resolutely, and probably would not have been taken alive, had not a woman broken both his legs with a stool. In this condition he was carried to London in a horse-litter, and once more sent to the Tower in December, 1417. Parliament was then sitting; and its records say that on Tuesday, 13th of December, Sir John Oldecastle, of Cowling, in the county of Kent, knight, being outlawed in the King's Bench, and excommunicated before by the archbishop of Canterbury for heresy, was brought before the Lords, and, having heard his said convictions, answered not thereto in his excuse. Upon which record and process it was adjudged that he should be taken as a traitor to the king and the realm; that he should be carried to the Tower of London, and thence drawn through the city to the

new gallows in St. Giles, without Temple Bar, there to be hanged and burned hanging.

“And on the day appointed,” says Bale, “he was brought out of the Tower with his arms bound behind him, having a very cheerful countenance. Then he was laid upon a hurdle, as though he had been a most heinous traitor to the crown, and so drawn forth into St. Giles’s Field, where they had set up a new pair of gallows. When he was come to the place of execution, and taken from the hurdle, he fell down devoutly upon his knees, and prayed to God to forgive his enemies. Then he stood up and beheld the multitude, exhorting them in most godly manner to follow the laws of God written in the Scriptures, and in any wise to beware of such teachers as they see contrary to Christ in their conversation and living, with many other special counsels. Then was he hanged up there by the middle in chains of iron, and so consumed alive in the fire, praising the name of God so long as life lasted. In the end, he commended his soul into the hands of God, and so departed hence most christianly, his body being resolved into ashes. And this was done in the year of our Lord, 1418, which was the sixth year of the reign of king Henry V., the people there present showing great dolour.”

The persecution continued to be carried on with unabated violence. William Taylor, a clergyman, was condemned by Chicheley, for maintaining that “prayers for spiritual gifts were to be made to God

alone, and that to pray to creatures was idolatry." Though, in the hope of saving his life, he qualified this proposition by admitting that "an inferior kind of worship might, indeed, be paid to saints, and that their merits and intercessions were profitable both to the dead and living"—even this was not satisfactory: he was condemned to the stake and burned in Smithfield in 1423. Father Abraham, of Colchester, John White and John Waddon, priests, were also consigned to the flames for the crime of holding Lollard opinions. Many were doomed to perpetual imprisonment, severe flagellations, and various other punishments.

Of Chicheley, who died in 1443, it is nevertheless related that, though a cruel persecutor of the Lollards, he was not so fond of burning them as his predecessor; not, however, out of any tenderness for the wretched victims, but because he had observed that those scenes of horror excited compassion for the victims and indignation against their butchers.

The Popes at this period considered all the clergy of Christendom as their immediate subjects, on whom they might impose what taxes they pleased. "But," observes Henry, "though the clergy had a great veneration for the Pope, many of them had a greater veneration for their money, which obliged the court of Rome to call upon kings and princes to compel these refractory ecclesiastics to pay their taxes." Pope Eugenius IV., having demanded of the clergy

of England one tenth of the revenues of all their benefices, and apprehending that they would not very willingly submit to this imposition, sent to Henry VI., by his collector, a consecrated rose of gold, with a bull magnifying the honour which he had done the king by so precious a present, and explaining the mystical meanings of the rose. He omitted not, at the same time, to exhort the king to use all his authority over the clergy to induce them to pay the tax pleasantly, which, said his holiness, would be a great advantage to him and his subjects. The weak and bigoted monarch received the present with great ceremony; and Stafford, then primate and also chancellor, descanted in a long and eloquent speech to the papal collector on the beauties and virtues of the rose: but respecting the tax he was rather short, merely intimating that the king would send persons to converse on that subject with the Pope, and forbidding him to collect any money in England till they returned.

If the clergy displayed some spirit in defence of their own interests, they still tyrannized with undiminished cruelty over the property and lives of the unhappy Lollards. It is not to be supposed that their imbecile sovereign could resist any prejudices which the clergy might seek to instil into his mind against the professors of the reformed doctrine. There are letters from Henry to the aldermen and bailiffs of St. Edmondsbury, which prove his conviction that a spirit of sedition and rebellion was inherent in the

Lollards, and that they were not less hostile to the royal authority than to the corruptions of the Romish Church. In one of these, without date of the year, he adverts to riotous gatherings of the “misgoverned men of divers shires, and in especial of the shire of Kent, as well Lollardes as other robbers and pillers [plunderers] of our people, with intent to have subverted all the political rule of this our land, of the which men, Sir Nichol Conway, knight, the which is now taken and set fast, should [is said to] have been a captain, and of the which misgoverned men there be taken and in prison a great number.” Having been informed, he says, that there is likely to be a similar gathering in Cambridge town, he charges the magistrates of Bury to do all the diligence they can to the good rule of the said shire of Cambridge, and especially to prevent any gathering of those misguided men, and with all the might and power they can get to resist their malicious purposes.

In another of these letters, addressed to the same magistrates, apparently about a month after the former, the king, in still stronger language, speaks of “God’s traitors and ours, heretics in this our realm, commonly called Lollardes, the which now lately setting up and otherwise traitorously exhorted, stirred, and moved the people of our land to assemble, gather, and arise against God’s peace and ours purposing, no doubt, the subversion of the Christian faith and belief, of us also, and of all estates and gentlemen, and generally of all true

Christian men and women that will not follow them and assist them in their damnable errors and purposes, and would destroy all political rule and government, spiritual and temporal." He exhorts them, therefore, "to withstand and chastise the damnable malice of God's said traitors and ours;" charges them especially to inquire which of the inhabitants of the surrounding country have lately been absent from their homes, "where they have been, and of all the days, times, and places of their absence; and strictly to examine all new comers, and not to "suffer privy gatherings and conventicles to be had or made by night or by day."

Whether it was the malice of their priestly persecutors which caused the stigma of disloyalty and rebellion to be attached to the character of the Lollards or not, we have no means of deciding: but the expedient is known to have been adopted by the Papists on so many similar occasions, that we may fairly presume it was resorted to on this.

The fate of Dr. Reginald Pecock, bishop of Chichester, proved with what severity the Church was disposed to punish even in her own children any taint of what she called heresy. He commenced his career as the champion of abuses keenly censured by Wicklif; was translated, in 1450, from the see of St. Asaph to that of Chichester; and soon afterwards wrote a "Treatise of Faith," which proved the source of all his subsequent afflictions. In this work he attacked the Mendicant friars as unmercifully as Wicklif him-

self had done. He reproached them with substituting fable and romance for the truths of the Gospel; accused them of heresy and superstition; and gave them the name of pulpit-bawlers. As the Mendicants had, by their shameless impudence, made many enemies, both among the secular and the monastic clergy, these censures might have passed unrebuked, had the bishop not had the courage, surprising for one in his position, to grapple and shake the two main pillars of the Romish Church; insisting that the Scriptures are the substantial foundation, and the only rule of our faith; and that it was a hopeless thing to attempt to crush the Lollards by so questionable a principle as the infallibility of the priesthood.

The natural consequence of these doctrines was the persecution of their professor. An outcry of blasphemy was raised; the temporal lords joined in it, and, in 1457, he was expelled the house of peers, and forbidden the king's presence. At length, he was cited before Bouchier, the primate, convicted of heresy, and had no alternative but abjuration or the stake. He chose the former, probably dreading the idea of rebelliously setting his judgment in opposition to the Church not less than that of death itself. The ceremony was rendered as bitter as humiliation could make it. Brought to St. Paul's Cross in his episcopal habit, and placed at the feet of the archbishop, he was obliged to deliver his books with his own hand to the officer appointed to throw them into the flames. He read his abjuration in the presence of twenty thou-

sand people ; confessing himself a miserable sinner, who, by God's mercy, was brought back from darkness to the right way ; and exhorted all men, in the name of Almighty God, to give no faith to his pernicious doctrines.

If the Church, in her tender mercy, did not burn him alive, it is almost literally true, observes Le Bas, that she buried him alive. Stripped of his bishopric, he was confined for life at Thorney Abbey, in Cambridgeshire, in a secret chamber, which he was not to leave on any account. He was forbidden the use of pen, ink, and paper, and the only books allowed him were a mass-book, a psalter, a legendary, and the Bible. His diet was to be the same as the daily allowance of the convent, afterwards that of a sick or aged brother, with such further indulgence as health and age might require. How long he needed these considerate indulgences of his persecutors is not known.

The wars of the Roses, and the reigns of Edward IV. and his brother Richard, suspended the persecution of the Lollards. It was revived by Henry VII., who, says Fuller, "was more cruel to them than his predecessors." Fox relates a revolting instance of his wanton inhumanity. In the city of Canterbury there was an aged priest, who adhered so stedfastly to the doctrines of Wicklif, that all the arguments of the ablest divines could not shake him. Henry, hearing of his obstinacy, took it into his head to try his powers of persuasion, "though," observes Fuller, "we

never read before of his majesty's disputing, save when he disputed Bosworth Field with Richard the Third." His logic, however, proved as irresistible in this case as his sword had been in the other : but the conqueror made an inhuman use of his victory, for no sooner had the unhappy convert abjured his alleged errors than he sent him to the stake.

It was also during the reign of this cold-blooded monarch that Joanna Baughton, a venerable matron, upwards of fourscore, was doomed to suffer for her adherence to the opinions of Wicklif, whom she honoured as a saint. Though warned that the stake would be her portion if she persisted in her heretical opinions, she remained unshaken, and resigned her soul amidst the flames with heroic firmness. Such was the reverence paid to her virtues, that, in the following night, her ashes were collected as precious memorials of her martyrdom. Her daughter, the lady Young, afterwards suffered the same cruel death with the like constancy.

At Amersworth, a heretic, named Tylsworth, was condemned to the flames, and, by a refinement in barbarity, his only daughter, who had fallen under suspicion, was compelled to fire the pile prepared to consume him. Some indeed there were who delighted in adding vulgar insult to inhumanity. Nix, bishop of Norwich, infamous for his zeal in persecution, was accustomed to speak of persons supposed to be tainted with heresy as men who savoured of the frying-pan.

In spite of persecutions, however, the professors of

the reformed doctrines continued to increase. In the time of Henry VIII., Longland, bishop of Lincoln, was so seriously alarmed by the augmentation of their numbers in his diocese, that he complained on the subject to the king, and besought his aid for suppressing the heretics. Henry accordingly addressed letters to all mayors, sheriffs, and other officers, commanding them to assist the bishop in bringing the said heretics to justice. Armed with this authority, he lost no time in exercising it upon all who were suspected of inclining to the obnoxious opinions, imposing upon such as abjured them a rigorous penance, and sending without mercy those who adhered to them, or could be convicted of relapse, to the stake.

“The fervent zeal of those Christian days,” says Fox, “seemed much superior to our days and times; as manifestly may appear by their sitting up all night in reading and hearing, also by their expenses and charges in buying of books in English; of whom some gave five marks, some more, some less, for a book. Some gave a load of hay for a few chapters of St. James or St. Paul in English. In which rarity of books and want of teachers, this one thing I greatly marvel and muse at, to note in the registers, and to consider how the word of truth notwithstanding did multiply so exceedingly as it did among them. For I find and observe how one neighbour resorting to and conferring with another, eftsoones with a few words of their first or second talk, did win and turn their

minds to that wherein they desired to persuade them touching the truth of God's word."

These retired and domestic interviews of individuals, often the most lowly and humble, produced some of the most affecting situations that occurred during the whole progress of the Reformation. Fox says, of one whose only offence consisted in having been present at such meetings, which took place more frequently because reading was then a rare accomplishment, "The crimes whereupon he was examined and confessed were these: that he had been five times with William Sweeting in the fields keeping beasts, hearing him read many good things out of a certain book. At which reading also were present at one time Woodroffe, a net-maker, with his wife; also a brother-in-law of William Sweeting; and another time Thomas Goodred, who heard likewise the said Thomas Sweeting read."

The same writer relates that, "in 1532, Thomas Harding, about Easter holidays, when the other people went to the church, took his way into the woods, there solitarily to worship the living God in spirit and in truth. Where, as he was occupied in a book of English prayers, leaning or sitting upon a stile by the wood side, it chanced that one did espy him where he was, and came in great haste to the officers of the town, declaring that he had seen Harding in the woods looking on a book. Whereupon, immediately a rude rabble of them, like madmen, ran desperately to his house to search for books; and, in searching, went so

nigh that, under the boards of his floor, they found certain English books of holy Scripture. Whereupon this godly father, with his books, was brought before John Longland, bishop of Lincoln.* The upshot was, that he was burned as a relapsed heretic.

There was no artifice to which the popish clergy did not resort, in order to entrap these simple people, causing the wife to detect the husband, the husband the wife; the father the daughter, the daughter the father; the brother to discover the brother, and neighbour the neighbour. Neither were there any assemblies or readings held, but both the persons and the books were known; nor was any word so secretly spoken, or article mentioned, but it was disclosed: with such subtlety did the Catholic prelates prosecute their inquisitions and examinations, that nothing was done or said so covertly but it was at length brought to their knowledge.

When any of the victims of this horrible inquisition died in prison, "they were wont," says Fox, "to be thrown out to dogs and birds as unworthy of Christian burial. Notwithstanding this merciless commandment, there were some good men who secretly buried at night those who were thrown out in this manner; and many times the archers standing by, and singing together psalms at their burial."

The zeal of the bishops to suppress Wicklif's Bible only made it the more sought after. They who were able among the Reformers purchased copies; they

* Fox's Acts, p. 896.

who were not able procured at least transcripts of particular gospels or epistles; and when the flames were kindled, it was a common practice to fasten about the neck of the condemned heretic such of the scraps of Scripture as were found in his possession, that they might share his fate.

If, overpowered by the fear of death in so cruel a shape, any of these unfortunate victims of persecution purchased their lives by a recantation of their religious opinions, these abjurers, being tied fast with towels to a post, and their hands held so that they could not stir, were branded by the application of a hot iron to the cheek. On the sleeve, or upper part of their outer garment, they were obliged to wear a piece of coloured cloth to represent a faggot. To put off this badge was deemed a heinous offence; and particular care was taken to prevent them from hiding the mark of the brand. They were sent for life to various monasteries, and limited to the same fare that was given for alms. On certain market-days, and at different processions, they were obliged to appear in public with a faggot on their shoulders, and to bear the same token of their apostacy once at the burning of a heretic, when they should be required.

Relics of the barbarous persecution to which archbishops Arundel, Courtenay, and Chicheley, so zealously lent their aid, are to this day to be seen in the official residence of the English primates at Lambeth,

where the Lollards' Tower is thus named from containing the prison in which members of that obnoxious sect were confined. That prison, a room entered by a small pointed doorway, barely large enough to admit one person at a time, and provided with an inner and outer door of strong oak, thickly studded with iron, exhibits eight large iron rings, still firmly fixed, about breast high, in the wainscot that lines the walls. On these are rudely carved, with a knife or some sharp instrument, parts of sentences, names, initials, crucifixes—the work, no doubt, of some of the wretched prisoners who were confined there.

As each of the prelates had his prison for heretics, so one of the bell-towers at the west end of the old cathedral of St. Paul, which was destroyed by the great conflagration in 1666, was devoted to that purpose, and likewise called the Lollards' Tower. How many victims of ecclesiastical persecution languished within its walls history has not recorded; but we learn from Fox that at least one foul and midnight murder was here perpetrated in December, 1514. Richard Hunne, a respectable citizen, having dared to bring an action of premunire against a priest, was accused of heresy, and imprisoned in this tower, where he was found hanging. The coroner's inquest returned a verdict of wilful murder against the persons who had charge of the prison; and it was afterwards discovered that Dr. Horsey, chancellor of the diocese, assisted by the bell-ringer, had first mur-

dered the prisoner, and then hung his body against the wall in his own silken girdle, to induce a belief that he had committed suicide.

With a view to stifle the violent clamours excited by this event, and to withdraw the matter from the cognizance of the civil authority, Fitz-James, bishop of London, by the advice of some of his brother prelates, held a court at St. Paul's, in which Hunne, who had been ten days in the grave, was condemned as a heretic, because a Wicklif Bible had been found in his house; and his body was ordered to be taken up, and burned in Smithfield. This base evasion of justice increased the resentment of the laity; but, though the Commons passed a bill for bringing the murderers of Hunne to punishment, the influence of the clergy caused it to be thrown out by the Lords: and, after a long series of conferences, disputes, and bickerings, the business ended in a compromise. The prelacy agreed to drop all proceedings against their opponents, on condition that Horsey's plea of Not Guilty in the Court of King's Bench should be admitted by the Attorney-general as a sufficient answer to the crime of which he was accused.

Imperfectly as the ends of justice were fulfilled by this decision, it was one of those steps which led by slow but sure progression to the downfall of the Catholic hierarchy. In that age, to bring a churchman to the bar of a civil court was to triumph over the whole body of the priesthood, who thus made at least a virtual acknowledgment of the king's su-

premacý; and Henry VIII. ordered them to pay £1500 to the children of the deceased, in compensation for what he himself styles "the cruel murder."*

I cannot quit this subject without advertig to the just tribute which Dr. Wordsworth has paid in the Preface to his Ecclesiastical Biography, to the veracity of honest John Fox, whose testimony I have had frequent occasion to quote in the preceding pages. "Dr. John Milner," (vicar apostolic of the midland district of England, and of course a zealous champion of popery) says Wordsworth, "speaks of the frequent republications of Fox's lying Book of Martyrs, with prints of men, women, and children expiring in flames; the nonsense, inconsistency, and falsehood of which he had, he said, in part exposed in his letters to a prebendary. . . . These writings have not proved, and it never will be proved, that John Fox is not the most faithful and authentic of all historians: . . . The many researches and discoveries of later times in regard to historical documents, have only contributed to place the general fidelity and truth of Fox's melancholy Narrative on a rock which cannot be shaken."

The reign of religious persecution, it is well known, was not ended by the bold and decisive resolution of Henry VIII. to emancipate himself and his kingdom from the influence of the Romish See. If that arbitrary prince quarrelled with the Pope, he held fast

* Fox's Acts, ii. 8-14.

to popery—a system which furnishes much too convenient a salve for the consciences of wicked and unprincipled men to be lightly cast off. It was not before the young and truly pious Edward VI. ascended the throne, that the professors of the Reformed doctrines obtained a relief from the temporary horrors of popish domination, till fires were again kindled and victims again offered to the Moloch of Rome by his successor, whom posterity has justly branded with the epithet of *bloody Mary*.

Of the numbers who perished by this persecution, which lasted for above a century, we find no record : but some idea may be formed of the multitude of the sacrifices to the infatuation of the clergy and their sovereigns, from the hyperbolic declaration of a correspondent of Erasmus, that the frequency of executions at Smithfield had advanced the price of firewood in the neighbourhood of London.

V. PERSECUTIONS OF THE VAUDOIS, OR WALDENSES.

A Christian community, whose origin is buried in the obscurity of the early ages, whose doctrines appear to have been transmitted to them from the primitive apostolic times, and to have been preserved untainted from the successive corruptions engrafted on the mild precepts of the Gospel by the Church of Rome — a community which consequently never needed reformation — is a phenomenon that must excite peculiar interest in the mind of the philosophic as well as the religious reader. Such a phenomenon is presented by the Vaudois, or Waldenses, the very purity of whose doctrines has gained them a place in the calendar of Popish persecutions.

Cooped up in secluded valleys at the foot of the Alps, in the north-west corner of Piedmont, these people are conjectured by some to have been descendants of Christians who sought shelter there from the fury of the barbarian hordes by which Italy was invaded during the decline of the Roman empire. Neither the Vaudois nor their advocates, however, have thought it necessary to trace their origin higher

than to the period when they constituted part of the primitive flock so vigilantly and boldly guarded by the apostolic Claude, bishop of Turin, at the commencement of the ninth century.

It was about this time that the worship of images, that relic of paganism, was first decreed as an article of Romish faith by the council of Nice. In vain was this idolatry opposed by the council of Frankfurt, the authority of Charlemagne, and the indignation of the British and German Churches. The Popes were daily extending their authority, spiritual and temporal; the belief of the real presence in the sacrament was defended; the doctrine of purgatory was introduced, and simony was almost universal.

Among the opponents of these corruptions Claude stood pre-eminent. Born in Spain, and famous for his talents, he was appointed to the see of Turin by Louis le Debonnaire, who was himself alarmed at the progress of image-worship. Claude wrote commentaries on several parts of Scripture; of these his commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians is the only one printed. In his works, he asserts the equality of all the apostles to Peter, and maintains that Christ is the only head of the Church. He overthrows the doctrine of merits, anathematizes traditions, maintains that faith alone can save us, holds the Church liable to error, denies the efficacy of prayer for the dead; and, besides opposing these particular errors of the Church of Rome, severely reproaches her general superstition and idolatry. He pointedly

condemns the adoration of saints, images, and relics, and impugns the notion of the supremacy of the Pope.*

Precisely these opinions, maintained by the bishop of Turin in the beginning of the ninth century, are proved to have been held three hundred years later by the Vaudois. A document of unquestioned authenticity affords evidence on this point. It is an ancient poem, entitled *La Nobla Leçon*, containing a metrical abridgment of the history and doctrine of the Old and New Testament, in the original language of the country, and manifestly compiled for the purpose of perpetuating the principles of sound belief among the people. The exact date of this highly curious and valuable relic cannot be determined: from the opening lines it has been conjectured that it was composed in the year 1100, but the expressions are so vague as to be applicable to various periods within the succeeding century. Be this as it may, so much is certain that the essential doctrines and principles of the Reformation are to be found in this religious formulary, which concludes with an exposure of the gross errors of the Papacy, the simony of the priesthood, masses and prayers for the dead, and the abuses of the power of the keys.

Some writers, misled by the name, have most erroneously attributed the foundation of the Waldensian Church to Peter Waldo, a wealthy merchant

* Acland's compendious History of the Vaudois, prefixed to *Glorious Recovery of their Valleys*.

of Lyons, who flourished about the year 1160; though Beza expressly asserts that, so far from the Vaudois of the valleys having taken their name from him, he was himself named Valdo because he adopted the doctrine of the Vaudois, or inhabitants of the valleys, called in the old language *vauux*. It is related that, while Waldo and some of the principal citizens of Lyons were one day conversing together, one of them was struck with death before their eyes; and that, deeply impressed by this circumstance with the sense of human frailty, he renounced the world, and gave himself up entirely to meditation and to the propagation of piety. He first began with his own family, and then, as his fame increased, admitted and instructed others, and also translated portions of the Scriptures, or caused them to be translated, into the vernacular language of Gaul. The clergy of Lyons, when these proceedings came to their knowledge, prohibited his domestic instructions; but so far was this from deterring him, that he inquired the more diligently into the opinions of the clergy, and into religious rites and customs, and opposed them the more openly and ardently. After teaching for four or five years at Lyons, and gaining many disciples, Waldo drew upon himself the persecution of the archbishop, who, in 1172, anathematized and excommunicated him and his followers. For three years, he remained concealed in the city or its environs, till Pope Alexander III. launched his fulminations against all who should dare to hold communication

with the reformer. Waldo, for the sake of his friends, then fled from Lyons, and became a wanderer for the rest of his life. At first he took refuge in Dauphiné, probably with the intention of retiring to the secluded valleys of the Vaudois in Piedmont; but the persecution was too fierce in this part of France, and he was obliged to direct his course to the western provinces, and thence to Picardy, where he made many converts. Finding no asylum in the French dominions, he went to Germany, and settled in 1184 in Bohemia, whither the doctrines of the Vaudois had already penetrated. By the persecution of these early reformers and the zeal of the Waldensian preachers, their doctrines were circulated through France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and even reached England, where they strewed the seed of that reform commenced by Wicklif.

The name of Walter Lollard is inserted by Leger and others in the list of Vaudois pastors. It is related of him that, after preaching in Languedoc, Guienne, and Germany, he extended his labours to England, to be preserved here for ever through Wicklif and his followers. The Vallensian origin of their doctrine is attested not only by the denomination of our early reformers, but by Walden, Bellarmine, and other Catholic writers. Popeliniere traces it from the valleys of Piedmont, through Languedoc (the country of the Albigenses) to the neighbouring province of Guienne, at that time in the possession of the English, among whom it was transferred, he says,

from hand to hand to Wicklif. With this account the information possessed by the Vaudois pastors themselves exactly agrees. On this subject, the Rev. Mr. Gilly, in his instructive account of these people, gives a report of a conversation which he had at the time of his visit in 1823 with M. Peyrani, the moderator, or bishop, of their Church, which is particularly interesting.

“I must not omit,” he says, “to notice the evident satisfaction M. Peyrani felt in explaining how closely the doctrines of the Vaudois Church assimilate to those of the Church of England. ‘But, remember,’ said the old man, with conscious and becoming pride, ‘that you are indebted to us for your emancipation from papal thralldom. We led the way. We stood in the front rank, and against us the first thunderbolts of Rome were fulminated. The baying of the bloodhounds of the Inquisition was heard in our valleys before you knew its name. They hunted down some of our ancestors, and pursued others from glen to glen, and over rock and mountain, till they obliged them to take refuge in foreign countries. A few of these wanderers penetrated as far as Provence and Languedoc, and from them were derived the Albigenses or heretics of Albi. The province of Guienne afforded shelter to the persecuted Albigenses. Guienne was then in your possession. From an English province our doctrines found their way into England itself, and your Wicklif preached nothing more than what had been advanced by the ministers of our valleys four hundred years before his time.

“ ‘Whence,’ continued my aged informant, with increased animation, ‘came your term Lollards, but from a Waldensian pastor, Walter Lollard, who flourished about the middle of the thirteenth century? and the Walloons of the Low Countries were nothing more than a sect whose name is a corruption of our own. As for us, we have been called heretics, and Arians but we are, like yourselves, a church built up in Christ, a church with the discipline and regular administration of divine service which constitute a church. We have adhered to the pure tenets of the apostolic age, and the Roman Catholics have separated from us. Ours is the apostolical succession, from which the Roman hierarchy has departed, rather than we. We are not only a church by name and outward forms, but a church actually interested by faith in Jesus Christ, the corner-stone.’ ”*

So long as all the efforts of the papal See were engaged by the struggle with powerful bishops and still more powerful sovereigns, this remnant of genuine Christians was left in the enjoyment of comparative peace. But no sooner had the Roman pontiffs acquired a spiritual and temporal supremacy, than it was directed against those who had dared to condemn their usurpations and the errors upheld by them. Alexander III., presiding over a synod held at Tours in 1167, pronounced the doctrine of the

* Gilly's *Visit to the Valleys*, 4to. p. 79-81.

Vaudois to be a damnable heresy of long standing. Another synod, held at La Vaux, urged the Pope to exterminate “an heretical pest, generated in olden times, of enormous growth and great antiquity.” Still the papists themselves were obliged to bear witness to the irreproachable doctrines and lives of the professors of this “damnable heresy.”

An Italian inquisitor, named Reinerus Sacco, expressing his alarm at the danger which threatened his church from the heresy of the Vaudois, because it was more ancient than any other, as well as more general, and because those who professed it were both pious and moral, adds :—“While all other sects disgust the public by their gross blasphemies against God, this, on the other hand, has a great appearance of piety. For those who belong to it live justly among men, have a sound doctrine in all points respecting God, and believe in all the articles of the Apostles’ creed : but they blaspheme the Romish Church.” Cassini, a Franciscan, writing in the 16th century against the Vaudois, expresses himself nearly to the same effect. “The errors of the Vaudois,” he says, “consist in their denial that the Romish is the holy mother church, and in their refusal to obey her traditions. In other points, they recognise the Church of Christ ; and, for my part, I cannot deny that they have always been members of his church.”

Thus exemplary and unoffending, these people were nevertheless marked out for papal vengeance.

Bulls were issued against them by John XXII. and his successor Clement VII., but for a considerable time the attention of the Popes was diverted from the chastisement of the Vaudois to the subjugation of princes. The uncertain tenure by which the house of Savoy held the country which they occupied contributed also to save them from the rigorous execution of the papal mandates.

The district inhabited by them is situated in the heart of the valleys which extend along the eastern foot of the Cottian Alps, from Mount Viso to the Col de Ses-trieres, amidst the wildest and most secluded of those fastnesses which lie between the Clusone and the Pelice, two mountain torrents that fall into the river Po. This district originally formed part of the marquisate of Susa, or of the duchy of Turin, both fiefs of the empire, which were granted in the 13th century by William count of Holland to the counts of Savoy. About this time occurred the first persecution of the Vaudois recorded by historians. In the depth of winter, the inhabitants of the valley of Prajelas were furiously attacked. Those who escaped the general slaughter perished from the severity of the weather on the lofty mountains to which they fled: and Morland relates that, in one morning, eighty mothers with their children were found frozen to death on the snow.

Recourse was had, during the following centuries, to a system of partial persecution. Persons pre-eminent for virtue or talents, and for that reason

obnoxious to the inquisitors of Turin, were seized and doomed to imprisonment for life or the stake. Their sufferings, and the fortitude with which they were endured, seemed rather to produce emulation than terror. Innocent VIII., therefore, issued a bull in 1487, denouncing the Vaudois as heretics, calling upon all the authorities, spiritual and temporal, to join in their extermination, threatening with extreme vengeance such as should refuse to take part in the crusade ; promising remission of sins to those who engaged in it, and dissolving all contracts made with the offenders.* Even the inquisitors and monks were exhorted in this bull to take arms unanimously against those heretics, to crush them like poisonous adders, and to make all possible efforts for their *holy* extermination. It granted also to each true believer a right to seize the property, moveable or immoveable, of the victims without form of process. Albert de Capitaneis, archdeacon of Cremona, was sent as papal legate into Piedmont, to preach the crusade.

By means of such incitements, an army of 18,000 regular troops was collected, and, with a host of undisciplined followers, burst on every side into the valleys. For several months, the work of carnage and devastation was prosecuted ; till Philip VII.,

* Acland informs us that the original bull was preserved, among the manuscripts collected by Sir Samuel Morland, in the library of the University of Cambridge, from which the volume containing it was stolen.

visited by some feelings of compunction for the slaughter of his most industrious subjects, not unmingled with alarm at some symptoms of well-organized resistance, offered to receive the Vaudois into his favour, provided that they would make certain submissions to his temporal authority; and these, with that affectionate loyalty to their sovereign for which they have in all cases been distinguished, they readily conceded.

As a curious instance of the absurd stories circulated respecting these simple people, it is related that, when their deputies appeared before Philip to renew the oath of allegiance, he desired to see some of their children, in order to ascertain the truth of a report that they were born with only one eye in the centre of the forehead.

The inhabitants of these valleys were now permitted to enjoy a short interval of repose, which enabled them to offer an asylum to their brethren in the neighbouring marquisate of Saluzzo, then subject to France, who had been ordered, on pain of death, either to renounce their faith, or at a moment's warning to abandon their possessions.

Louis XII., predecessor of Francis, by whom this cruel decree was issued, proved himself to be a prince above the bigoted spirit of his age, and truly deserving of the title of Father of his Country. When Innocent VIII., through his legate Julien, after accusing the Vaudois of many crimes, urged Louis to extirpate them from his dominions without grant-

ing an audience to their deputies, "Though I were at war with the Turk or the devil," replied the king, "I would hear what he had to say for himself." The Vaudois, having made their defence, Louis sent two commissioners—one of them a Dominican and the royal confessor—to the country inhabited by the accused. Their report, upon oath, was to this effect: "Having visited the parishes and churches of the Vaudois, we find no images, no trace of the service of the mass, nor any paraphernalia used in the ceremonies observed by Catholics. But, having also made a strict inquiry into their manner of living, we cannot discover the least shadow of the crimes imputed to them. On the contrary, it appears that they piously observe the sabbath, baptize their children after the manner of the primitive Church, and are thoroughly instructed in the doctrine of the Apostles' Creed and in the law of God." The king, on hearing this report, indignantly exclaimed, "By the holy mother of God, these heretics whom you urge me to destroy are better men than you or myself, or any of my subjects!" and disbanded the army prepared for their destruction. So little did this excellent monarch dread the thunders of the Vatican, that he had a medal struck with the inscription:—*Perdam Babylonis nomen*—"I will blot out the name of Babylon!" Well had it been for France if his immediate successors had possessed a spirit equally independent.

The first edict of Francis was not indeed carried

into execution. When the governor of the province of Saluzzo communicated the orders which he had received to his council, a Catholic archdeacon rose and made the following bold and honest remonstrance in behalf of these proscribed victims—"Assuredly the king of France must have received some very false and malicious information concerning these poor people. We must delay the execution of his edict, until his majesty can be made acquainted with the real character of this portion of his Italian subjects, who are good and honourable men, well disposed and faithful to his service, and live peaceably with their Catholic neighbours." This manly testimony, equally honourable to the Protestants and their amiable advocate, was the means of saving their lives, for that time at least. The murderous intention was at first suspended, and afterwards abandoned till another opportunity.

In 1534, the Vaudois of Piedmont were again unexpectedly attacked by order of Charles, then duke of Savoy; but, owing to the small force of the assailants and the resolute defence opposed to them, the slaughter was confined to such only of the intended victims as were treacherously surprised. Another expedient was then tried, less formidable in appearance, but more mischievous in the result. Small parties, stationed at all the outlets of the district, seized every person who approached; and fortunate was he who escaped lingering torture by a speedy death.

In 1536, the chances of war having placed the Vaudois in subjection to France, they presented an humble supplication to Francis I. for toleration. The king replied, in the ferocious spirit of an inquisitor, that "he was not burning heretics in France to foster them among the Alps." Francis, however, still hesitated to issue orders for their persecution.

Great was the astonishment of these peasants when they learned, soon afterwards, that similar opinions to their own, to which their ancestors had been martyrs, and of which they looked upon themselves as the last depositaries, had found powerful protectors in Germany and some partisans in France. They rejoiced without pride: their pastors complied with the wishes of the Protestant ministers of Switzerland, who were desirous of forming a union with them, not so much to increase the force of the reformed religion, as to give it a more ancient origin. This act was denounced to Francis I.; but that monarch, though resolved to uphold the Catholic system, could not determine to punish these industrious peasants as rebels.

In 1540, however, the parliament of Aix, withheld by no such scruples, resolved upon decisive measures against the descendants of a little colony of the Waldenses, who had settled in the mountains of Dauphiné. Summoned before it on account of their religion, they were deterred from appearing by the danger that must have attended compliance. A decree was therefore issued, enacting that every dissentient from the holy

mother church should acknowledge his errors, and obtain reconciliation within a stated period, under the severest penalties in case of disobedience ; and, because Merindol was considered as the principal seat of the heresy, that devoted town was ordered to be razed to the ground. With a spirit of the most refined cruelty, the edict added that all the caverns, hiding-places, cellars, and vaults, in the vicinity of the town should be carefully examined and destroyed ; that the woods should be cut down, and all the gardens and orchards laid waste ; and that none who had ever possessed a house or property in the town, or within a certain distance, should ever occupy it again, either in his own person, or in that of any of his name or family, in order that the memory of the excommunicated sect might be utterly wiped away from the province, and the place be made a desert.

De Thou relates that, before the king would permit the execution of this barbarous ordinance, he ordered William du Bellay, count of Langeau, to inquire into the doctrines and morals of these people. Two Romish priests were accordingly despatched for this purpose, and returned the following account : These Waldenses had been a very suffering people ; they originally came from Piedmont, and employed themselves as shepherds and husbandmen ; had rebuilt some villages destroyed in the wars, and restored to cultivation many barren places. They were a peaceable people, it was stated, and beloved of their neighbours ; men of good and godly conversation, careful to perform their promises

and pay their debts, suffering none of their own people to be in want or beggary, and, to the utmost of their means, liberal to strangers and poor travellers ; and, moreover, they were noted among the other inhabitants of the district for their total abstinence from blasphemy or swearing of any sort, unless when required by law, and for withdrawing from all company indulging in wanton and profane discourse. It was admitted, on the other hand, that they held in abhorrence the superstitions of the Church of Rome—the most unpardonable offence of which they could be guilty. Of course, notwithstanding their piety and their blameless lives, the only indulgence granted to them was a respite of three months, with the threat that, if after that they still persisted in their errors of faith, they should be punished with the utmost severity.

Lacretelle, in his *History of the Wars of Religion in France*, seems to insinuate that the king never assented to the execution of the barbarous decree of the parliament of Aix, which was kept in abeyance for five years. Violent persons, says that writer, strove to hurry Francis into measures suggested by a barbarous zeal. At their head was Jean Meynier, baron d'Oppede, who, uniting, by a most dangerous abuse, the functions of first president of the parliament of Aix and military lieutenant of the province, displayed the spirit of an executioner, whether he pronounced decrees or carried them into execution. He had sought the hand of a wealthy widow, who

combined personal charms with the purest virtues. The countess of Cental owed the rapid augmentation of her fortune to the pains she had taken to draw the Vaudois, who left not a foot of ground around them untilled, to her possessions. Respected at court, she lent her support to these peasants, the only heretics that were no innovators.

What this lady could learn concerning the character of the baron d'Oppède made her tremble for her vassals. She refused his hand. He swore to be revenged, and a horrible massacre was the means to which he resorted. To imputations which he revived against the Vaudois, he added new ones, contrived with consummate art. He reported to the government that the Vaudois designed to form themselves into republican cantons, like those of Switzerland, whose errors they shared, and with which they kept up a guilty correspondence; that they were forming assemblages, training the young men to arms, and ripe for rebellion. Fanatic or perverse magistrates confirmed the testimony of the impostor. Francis was undetermined; the cardinal de Tournon was alarmed; the court of Rome threatened its old enemies. The king had not yet come to any decision. "Let us anticipate the orders of the court," said Oppède to the parliament of Aix: "we possess the power, and it is our duty, since religion enjoins it." A levy of men, directed by the king in Provence, and destined to serve against the enemies of the state, was employed against the Vaudois. The commander

of these new troops placed them at the disposal of d'Oppède, and resolved to preside himself over this barbarous expedition.

D'Oppède was accompanied by some magistrates, in whom he had kindled a rage equal to his own. Those men who were alleged to be in training for rebellion fled before a handful of soldiers. Women, children, and aged people, sought to save themselves by flight from the general massacre. At length, they reached the foot of the mountains of Piedmont. While ascending laboriously the rocks that were to separate them from France, fires kindled on the summit filled them with dread of fresh enemies. A Piedmontese soldier, from an impulse of pity, shouted to them from a distance, "Come no further, or you are undone!" They turned back: the men dispersed; the women had scarcely strength to crawl after them. D'Oppède's troops advanced on all sides: rape was the first act by which these defenders of the faith displayed their zeal. Houses, barns, orchards, were all consigned to the flames. Not one of the inhabitants was spared: almost all those who had fled were taken and reserved for the degrading punishment of the galleys. Not a vestige was left of the flourishing village of Merindol. D'Oppède then proceeded to Cabrières. Thirty men and sixty women, who had not quitted the place, refused to open the gates: too weak to make a long resistance, they strove at least to obtain a capitulation, and to save their lives. They did obtain it, and a promise of liberty, but no sooner

were they out of the town, than they were surrounded and butchered. Twenty-eight villages were consigned to the flames ; more than four thousand Vaudois perished ; the entire population was swept away.

Anquetil, a Catholic writer, as well as Lacretelle, expressly asserts that, at the solicitation of the sanguinary d'Oppède, the king did grant permission for the employment of arms against the Waldenses inhabiting the Alps nearest to Provence. As the picture which he draws of the horrors inflicted by popish intolerance on the most innocent and unoffending of men furnishes some additional traits, I shall not hesitate to introduce it.

“ Twenty-two towns or villages were burned or pillaged with an inhumanity of which the history of the most barbarous nations scarcely affords an example. The wretched inhabitants, surprised in the night, and hunted from rock to rock by the light of the flames which were consuming their habitations, frequently escaped one snare only to fall into another. The pitiful cries of the aged, the women, and the children, instead of softening the hearts of the soldiers, maddened with rage, like their leaders, only served to guide them in the pursuit of the fugitives, and to indicate the points against which to direct their fury. Voluntary surrender did not exempt the men from slaughter, nor the women from brutal outrages at which nature revolts. It was forbidden, under pain of death, to afford them harbour or succour. At Cabrières, one of the principal towns of that district,

more than seven hundred men were butchered in cold blood; and the women, who had remained in their houses, were shut up in a barn containing a great quantity of straw, which was set on fire, and those who endeavoured to escape by the windows were driven back with swords and pikes. According to the tenor of the sentence, the houses were demolished, the woods cut down, and the fruit-trees uprooted; and in a short time this tract, previously so fertile and populous, became an uninhabited waste."

D'Oppède gloried in this expedition; he expected applause for his barbarities, but the recital produced nothing but horror. The king refused to see him, and, in his last moments, enjoined his successor to punish the massacre of the Vaudois. The parliament of Paris, which was directed to try the principal actors, shewed the greatest weakness and partiality. D'Oppède dared almost to urge his judges to imitate his example, and to shew no more mercy to heretics than he had done. After fifty solemn sittings, he was acquitted, together with the accomplices of his cruelty. Guerin, the advocate-general, alone was hanged, not as a murderer, but for forgery. De Thou alleges that the principal cause of his condemnation was the want of a protector at court; but what probably occasioned his ruin was his having taken part against d'Oppède on the trial. This man had displayed an atrocious alacrity in the slaughter of the Vaudois, urging on the soldiers by horrible shouts of *Tolle! tolle!* Kill! kill!

The enormities practised on this occasion in Provence were extended to Dauphiné and Languedoc : few were the Protestants spared, and still fewer those who had the courage to acknowledge that they belonged to the proscribed party. But when did religious persecution, however fierce, fail to produce examples of the sublimest heroism ! One of these is cited by Gilly in the person of Aymond de la Voye, who boldly went from village to village, to confirm the wavering and to cheer the desponding, till, having incurred suspicion, he was seized and carried before the tribunal of the Inquisition. The first question put to him, with a design to draw forth a disclosure which might lead to the apprehension of others, was, “ Who are your associates ? ” “ My associates,” he answered, “ are those who know and do the will of my heavenly Father, whether they be nobles, merchants, peasants, or men of any other condition.”

He was asked, Who is the head of the Church ?—Jesus Christ.

Is not the Pope the head of the Church ?—No, if he is a good man, he is the minister and primate of the Roman Church, but nothing more.

Is not the Pope the successor of St. Peter ?—Yes, if he be like St. Peter, but not else.

His persecutors, finding that he was not to be moved, ordered him to be led to execution. As he passed an image of the Virgin Mary, he refused to bow to it ; and the execrations of an infuriated mob had

no other effect than to make him pray aloud, "O Lord, I beseech thee to make it known to these deluded creatures that to thee only they ought to bow the head and offer supplications!" As he ascended the scaffold, he cried out with a firm voice, "Be it known that I die not a heretic, but a Christian!" The clamorous multitude insisted that his mouth should be stopped; and, before the executioner had inflicted the tortures usual on such occasions, he was ordered to despatch him, because there was no other way of silencing the undaunted Aymond de la Voye, whom protracted sufferings could not intimidate.

While the Provençal Waldenses were exposed to enormities like these, which were meant to extinguish the light of the Protestant faith on the western side of the Alps, a fresh storm was ready to burst over their brethren, the Vaudois of Piedmont.

In 1560, after the restoration of that province to Emanuel Philibert, this prince, who was favourably disposed towards his Protestant subjects, and long resisted all the importunities of the Pope and the bigoted Philip II., of Spain, to prove his zeal for the Catholic faith by the extermination of heresy, yielded at length to their solicitations. A strong army was assembled under the Count de la Trinité. The Vaudois, taught by experience that by successful resistance alone they could escape the threatened destruction, concealed the helpless in caverns, while the young and able barricaded themselves in spots which Nature had rendered most defensible. The

count found every wood an ambush, every rock a fort, and all his movements were discovered by spies stationed on the heights. Mortified by repeated failures, he applied for reinforcements: but every fresh combat served only to increase his disgrace and the confidence of the Vaudois, till winter compelled a suspension of hostilities.

The reader will not be displeased to find here a more explicit account of these proceedings, extracted from a letter, written by Scipio Lentulus, a Neapolitan, who appears to have joined the Vaudois, inserted in Morland's History of those people, and thence copied in Gilly's Appendix.

“There is a certain valley in the county of Piemont, within five or six miles of Mount Vesulo, which from the town of Lucerna is called the valley of Lucerna; and in it there is a little valley, which from Angrogna, a small river running through it, is called the valley of Angrogna. Next adjoining to this are two other valleys; that is to say, the valley of Perosa, so called from the town of that name, and the valley of S. Martino. In these there lie divers little towns and villages, whose inhabitants, assisted by the ministers of God's word, do make open profession of the Gospel.

“Moreover, I suppose that there are near 8,000 faithful souls inhabiting in this place. But among the men, who are bred up to endure labour, seeing they have from their childhood been inured to husbandry, you will find very few that know how to

engage in combat. From hence it comes to pass that very few of them are ready upon any urgent occasion to defend themselves against public injuries. Yea, and the valleys themselves lie so remote from each other, that they cannot help one another till it be too late. And although these towns and villages have their counts or lords, yet the duke of Savoy is lord over them all.

“This duke, before he came from Nice into Piemont, diligently took order with those counts and lords of places, that they should admonish the inhabitants to submit to him and the Pope; that is, that, casting off their ministers, they should admit Popish preachers and the abominable mass. Whereupon our people sent petitions unto the prince, beseeching him that he would take it in good part if they were resolved rather to die than to lose the true religion of Jesus Christ....but they shall be ready to amend their errors, if any there were, in case it should be manifested to them out of the word of God, to which alone they are to submit in this business: and as to what concerneth them in matters of behaviour and tributes and other things due both to him and their other lords, that he would send and make diligent inquiry whether they have at any time committed any offence, that so due punishment may be inflicted on them, because he should assuredly know they are willing to approve themselves with due reverence most obedient to him in all things.

“These petitions came to the hand of the prince,

but availed nothing with him, who was become a sworn enemy with Antichrist against Christ. Thereupon he sent forth edicts, declaring that those who should be present at the sermons of the ministers of the valleys, if but once, should be fined at one hundred crowns, and if a second time, then they should be condemned to the galleys for ever. Orders also were given to a certain judge to ride circuit up and down to put the penalties in execution, and to bind Christians and imprison them. The lords also and magistrates of places had the same power given them, and at length the godly were by this most impotent prince utterly given up to be plundered by all sorts of villains and afflicted with most grievous calamities.

“ He sent also a certain collateral judge of his own first to Carignan, there to act inhuman butchery upon the faithful ones of Christ; whereupon he caused one Marcellinus and Joan his wife, he being a Frenchman, but she a woman of Carignan, to be burnt alive with fire four days after they had been apprehended. But in this woman God was pleased to manifest an admirable example of constancy: for, as she was led to execution, she exhorted her husband, saying, ‘ Well done, my brother, be of good courage; this day doubtless we shall enter together into the joys of heaven.’ Some few days after this, there was apprehended also one John Carthignan, an honest plain man and truly religious, who, after three days of imprisonment, endured the torments of

fire with very great constancy. Who is able to reckon up the several incursions, slaughters, plunderers and innumerable miseries, wherewith this most savage generation of men did daily afflict all pious men, because, being exhorted by their ministers to patience, they took no course to defend themselves against injuries! Not long after also they apprehended one John, a Frenchman, and a minister, at a town called St. Germano, and, carrying him to a certain abbey near Pinerolo, there burnt him alive, who left a noble example of Christian constancy. The like was done also to the minister of the town of Maine, who was put to death at Susa by a slow fire, while he in the mean time stood as it were immoveable, and, not being touched with any sense of so incredible a cruelty, having his eyes fixed upon heaven, breathed out his happy soul.

“Therefore, when things were come to this pass, and these miseries were increased every day more and more, and seeing that the patience and extreme misery of our people could not in any measure allay the fury and rage of these most merciless brutes, they at length resolved by force, as well as they could, to free themselves and their wives and children from that barbarous usage. And although some of our ministers declared it was not well done, yet no admonitions could keep the people from resolving to defend themselves by arms. Hereupon it came to pass that, several encounters falling out, there fell within a few days about sixty of the plunderers.

When news hereof was brought to the tyrant, he commanded his men to forbear, and sent two of his noblemen that so they might bring matters to an accommodation with our people: but when it was perceived that all their drift was that our ministers might be cast out and the Pope received, the people would by no means yield to it. Wherefore, when the prince came into Piemont, and resided at Versello, about the kalends of November, 1560, with intent to destroy all in the valleys by fire and sword, he sent an army of about 4,000 foot and 200 horse, under the command of the duke [count] de la Trinité."

The writer then relates the submissions made by certain deputies whom the Vaudois sent to the duke. "These false brethren, in design to serve their own private ends, persuaded the people, though almost all the ministers cried out against it, that too easily giving credit to the most false promises of their enemies, laying down their arms, and sending deputies to the prince to promise obedience, they might, for 16,000 crowns, redeem both themselves and their religion. As soon as all these things were yielded to and promised by the too credulous people, through a vain hope of obtaining peace and religion, and when our deputies arrived at Versello, they were thence carried by the Lord de la Trinité to a certain cloister, there to abide for two months' space (to the end there might be time for collecting the moneys), and at length, casting themselves down at the feet of the

prince and of the Pope's legate, (who were both there, attended by a great number of the nobility, and men of inferior rank) they were constrained to supplicate the prince first, then the Pope's legate, that they would take pity on the people from whom they were sent, and to promise them, by an oath, that they would be ready to do all things that should be commanded by them.

• “The prince therefore growing confident upon this most solemn promise, immediately sent persons to command our people to receive and embrace that horrid idol of the mass; whereupon, considering the inconstancy of their deputies, and the deceit or rather extreme perfidiousness of the tyrants being discovered, they plainly refused to yield that those things should be ratified which their deputies had unadvisedly transacted, through their own levity, not with the consent of the people. . . . Then the tyrant, as soon as he came to understand this, was much more inflamed than ever before with anger, or rather outrageous fury, against our people; and, collecting a rabble of an army, he gave command to the Lord de la Trinité to waste and destroy all by fire and sword, without any regard of sex or age. Hereupon houses were everywhere set on fire, nor is there any kind of mischief which was not acted by those most wretched villains: by which means they forced our people, with their wives and children, to have recourse to the more craggy places of the mountains: a thing very lamentable to be seen. For, at

the very first assault, they were in a manner astonished, because, being spoiled both of their arms and goods, living in extreme want of all things, they did not see by what means they might be able to undergo so great and troublesome a war.

“ But at length, taking heart and trusting in the mercy and help of God, of the goodness of their cause, and being confident, because of the impiety and treachery of their adversaries, they resolved once again to defend themselves. To this end they appointed their guards and garrisons, fortified several places, blocked up passages, and were wholly resolute upon this point, to die rather than they would in any measure obey a perfidious and wicked prince in so abominable a matter. But what need many words? Things were come to such a pass that in several fights above 900 of the enemy were slain, whereas, on our side, hardly fifteen were wanting.”

No sooner had winter withdrawn its protection from the devoted inhabitants of the valleys, than the Savoyard general, strengthened by a body of French veteran troops, resumed operations. Before the face of his army, the Vaudois stormed a fort recently erected at Villaro. Concentrating his force, in order to revenge this insult, the count marched with 8,000 picked men to the valley of Angrogna, with the determination to drive his adversaries from the Pra del Tor, a small circular plain in the heart of the mountains, from which they had never yet been dislodged. For four successive days, assault

followed assault, as quickly as the baffled columns could be relieved by fresh troops; and such was the heroic defence made by the Vaudois, that Trinité was obliged to fall back on La Torre, leaving more than 400 men on the field, in addition to the wounded and those who had been previously interred.

Bent on accomplishing his purpose, the count resolved to make a second attempt, in which he employed Spanish troops. These, finding the contest as fruitless and destructive as the former, concluded that some fatality was attached to the scene of action. Seized by a superstitious panic, they proceeded to open mutiny. The Vaudois, taking advantage of the consequent confusion, became in their turn the assailants. The rout of the enemy was immediate and complete. The victors pursued the fugitives through the rude and narrow valley of Angrogna, where the torrent and the precipices proved almost as fatal to them as the sword.

During these operations, a striking proof was exhibited of the high estimation in which the moral character of the Vaudois was held even by those who would have rejoiced in their extermination. When compelled by the invading force to abandon the low country, and to seek refuge among the mountains, their enemies took possession of the small towns. The Roman Catholic families would have remained, but so licentious was the conduct of the soldiery that all the young females of La Torre, the principal place, retired and put themselves under the protec-

tion of the Vaudois, who had retired behind the fastnesses of Angrogna, rather than be exposed to the brutality of men who came to extirpate heresy, and to vindicate the honour of the Catholic religion. The duke of Savoy, weary of this disastrous warfare, and of sacrificing his troops and his treasure for the gratification of the Pope and the Inquisition, caused such conditions of peace to be proposed to the Vaudois as were gladly accepted. By this treaty he granted to the Protestants the free exercise of their religion in their own valleys, and threatened to punish all who should dare to give them any molestation. It allowed them also unrestricted communication with the rest of his dominions and liberty to reside in any part of them.

As, however, the Romish Church dispenses papist princes from the necessity of keeping their engagements with heretics longer than suits their interest, scarcely four years had elapsed from the conclusion of this treaty, solemnly ratified with all the usual formalities, when an edict, issued by the same prince, ordered that all who should not, within ten days, pledge themselves before a magistrate to attend mass, must leave the country within two months. Fortunately for the Vaudois, the spirited interference of some of the Protestant German princes prevented the execution of this iniquitous decree.

Scarcely a year now passed without exhibiting proofs of the hatred borne to the Vaudois by their popish rulers. The limits within which they had

liberty to dwell were continually more and more circumscribed; sudden attacks by their neighbours, for the sake of plunder, were authorised; great numbers were thrown into prison, and their property confiscated. On the exchange with France of the districts of Gex and la Bresse for the marquisate of Saluzzo, the Vaudois were extirpated, root and branch, from this newly acquired territory by Charles Emanuel, the reigning duke of Savoy.

About this time, the Protestant schools and colleges were suppressed, and Popish convents established in the valleys. The inhabitants were forbidden under severe penalties to send their children to foreign countries for education; and the abduction of males under twelve and females under fourteen years of age, for the purpose of converting them to the Romish faith, was sanctioned by law.

At length, after repeated violations and retrenchments of the immunities guaranteed to them by solemn treaty, "the bloody ordinance of Gastaldo," so named from its consequences, was issued in the beginning of the year 1655. It decreed that such of the Vaudois as would not embrace the Catholic faith, or sell their possessions to those who professed it, must within a few days quit their native valleys. In spite of the humble supplications presented by the Vaudois to the different members of the government in the hope of averting the storm, upwards of a thousand families were driven from their homes and

properties, in the depth of winter, to the shelterless recesses of Alpine heights. The marquis de Pianezza entered the valleys with an army of 15,000 men. Aware of the desperate resistance which he should have to encounter, if the Vaudois should flee to the mountains and concentrate themselves there, he affected a desire for an amicable arrangement, and invited them to send deputies to confer on the terms. These he treated with great apparent kindness, and promised to defer hostilities, if, in token of their pacific disposition, they would receive a few companies of soldiers into the different villages. Suspecting no treachery, the simple people complied, and the massacre which ensued filled all Protestant Europe with horror. Indeed, the enormities committed were such as to extort unqualified reprobation from Catholics themselves, as may be seen by the following extracts quoted by Acland, from a work entitled *Abrégé de l'Histoire de ce Siècle de Fer*, published at Brussels in 1660, and written, as Leger informs us, by a Papist.

“ I hold in abhorrence,” says this Romish writer, “ all enmities on account of difference in religion, and all those who by the violence of their prejudices disturb the public repose. Those who love God with all their souls do not foment hatreds or delight in carnage. The persecutions of the Irish* and the

* The massacre of the Protestants in Ireland, in 1641.

Vaudois, who inhabit some valleys under the duke of Savoy, appear to result from the hatred I have mentioned”.....

After adverting to the ordinance of 1655, the writer proceeds: “This order compelled a journey in the depth of winter over high mountains and through deep snow, the hardships of which might have moved the rocks to compassion—a feeling foreign to the hearts of those who were to enforce the order.

“Robbers, secretly instigated, plundered the houses, and thus compelled the exiles to return and defend their property, while awaiting the effect of their remonstrances. Those who returned were termed rebellious, and were surprised by a Piedmontese army, commanded by the marquis of Pianessa and five French regiments under the count de Quinsey. Four thousand victims suffered death under cruelties too horrible to be related. Ah! great God! if thy justice were not checked by mercy, this age would not have run half its career! The eye could see in these valleys nothing but flames; the ear heard only pitiable cries and their lamentable echoes. The Vaudois being driven in this manner from the valleys of Lucerna and Angrogna, the horrible process was repeated in that of St. Martin. This carnage drove to arms those who found no refuge in humility or supplications. Despair provides weapons in abundance. Four hundred

Vaudois descended to St. Secondo, cut in pieces 150 soldiers, burnt several places.

“The news of these commotions alarmed all the neighbouring Protestants, who wrote to the Protector and the States General. The English, when informed of these massacres, were so moved with compassion for their elder brethren, that they implored the Protector seriously to interfere. In the mean time, the Vaudois were in constant conflict with the Savoyards, burning their towns as their own had been burnt, and giving as little quarter as they had received.

“All Protestants had at heart the peaceful re-establishment of the Vaudois: for when they want to prove the antiquity of their doctrine, they refer to that of the Vaudois, in the pure preservation of which their own is necessarily involved.”

It would appear that the duke of Savoy himself was ashamed of the inhumanities perpetrated in his name on the wretched Protestants of the valleys; for a state paper, under the title of a *Factum* or *Narrative of Transactions in the valley of Lucerna*, in 1655, was published for the purpose of contradicting the reports circulated concerning the barbarity of the troops; and, for a confirmation of this contradiction, an appeal was made in that paper to the testimony of an officer, belonging to them. “He who commanded the said regiment,” says the *Factum*, “was the Signor du Petit Bourg, a professor

of the pretended reformed religion, as was the adjutant, who caused all the orders that were given to be put in execution. Now the marquis gave command to him, and recommended to his especial care to see that the people of Angrogna should be treated in the mildest manner possible. This Signor du Petit Bourg hath the reputation of being a person of so much honour that there is no doubt he will speedily attest the truth hereof, and that he will never say he received any order to the contrary." Du Petit Bourg, however, made a very different attestation from that which was expected of him.

"I, the Signor du Petit Bourg, first captain of the regiment of Gransé and commander of the same, having received instructions from Prince Thomas to join the marquis de Pianezza, who was then at La Torre, just as I was ready to set out, the ambassador sent for me, and desired me to speak to M. de Pianezza, and to use my efforts to accommodate the troubles then existing in the Protestant valleys of Piemont: in order whereunto I did then address myself to the said marquis, and entreated him with great earnestness that he would permit me to undertake the said accommodation; which I supposed that I should be able to effect. But he refused this my request, notwithstanding the endeavours I used to persuade him, and, instead of the least mitigation of affairs that this or any other consideration was likely to produce, I was witness to many great violences and cruelties exercised by the banditti and

soldiers of Piemont, upon all of every age, sex, and condition, whom I myself saw massacred, dismembered, hung up, and ravished, with many horrid circumstances of barbarity. And so far is it from truth that this was done by virtue of orders issued by me, (as it is falsely alleged in a certain relation printed in French and Italian) that I beheld the same with horror and regret. And whereas it is said in the same relation that the marquis de Pianezza commanded me to treat them leniently and in the best manner I could, the event clearly demonstrated that the orders he gave were quite contrary: and it is certain that, without any distinction of those who did or did not resist, they were treated with every kind of inhumanity; their houses were burnt, their goods were plundered, and, when prisoners were brought before the marquis, I saw him give orders to grant them no quarter at all, ‘because,’ said he, ‘his highness is resolved to have none of this religion in any of his dominions.’

“And as for what he protests in the same declaration, namely, that there was no injury done to any, except during the fight, nor the least outrage committed upon any lunatic or idiot, I will assert and do maintain that it was not so, having seen with mine own eyes several men killed in cold blood, and even women, aged persons, and young children miserably murdered.

“With regard to the manner in which they made themselves masters of Angrogna, to pillage and burn

the same, they did it easily enough; for, excepting six or seven who made opposition, seeing there could be no mercy shown, the peasants thought more of flying than fighting the enemy.

“ In short, I absolutely affirm and protest before God that none of those cruelties before mentioned were executed by my order, but, on the contrary, seeing that I could effect no mitigation, I was obliged to retire and quit the command of the regiment, for fear of being present at more such iniquitous actions.

(Signed)

“ DU PETIT BOURG.

“ Done at Pinerolo, Nov. 25, 1655.”

All Protestant Europe was fired with indignation on hearing of the sufferings of the inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont, and by none of the legitimate princes was that feeling expressed with greater energy than by the Protector Cromwell and his Latin secretary, the inspired bard of *Paradise Lost*, whose impassioned apostrophe, written on this occasion, beginning

“ Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie bleaching on the Alpine mountains cold,”

is well known to every lover of poetry. Cromwell, as soon as he was informed of the proceedings in the valleys, not only addressed remonstrances to the king of France, and despatched envoys or letters to all the Protestant sovereigns and States, urging them to come forward in support of their persecuted brethren;

but ordered a narrative representing the state of the Waldensian Church to be printed and distributed throughout Great Britain and Ireland, and recommended a general subscription for its relief. He set the example by contributing himself £2000 from the privy purse; and a sum exceeding £38,000 was soon collected.

In a second letter to Louis XIV., the Protector intimated that he expected him not only to exert his influence with the duke of Savoy on behalf of the Vaudois, but to afford shelter and protection to such of them as might seek refuge in his dominions. The man who, on demanding redress for the seizure of a British consul by the Inquisition, and being answered by the king of Spain that he had no authority over that tribunal, instantly replied "Then I will declare war against it," was not to be lightly provoked or trifled with. This Louis well knew; and, probably under the direction of the wily Mazarin, he assumed towards Cromwell a tone of extraordinary moderation. "I am very glad, Monsieur le Protecteur," he wrote, "that you are touched with the calamities of these poor people, and I have anticipated your wishes by continuing my intercessions with the duke of Savoy for their comfort and relief, and for their establishment in the respective places of his dominions, which they enjoyed by concession from the dukes, his predecessors. For the rest, you have judged rightly in not believing that I had given any orders to my troops to do such execution among them: in fact, there could

be no suspicion that I had contributed to the chastisement of any of the duke of Savoy's subjects of the so-called reformed religion, at the same time that I was giving so many marks of my good-will to those of my own subjects of the same profession, having had cause to applaud their fidelity and zeal for my service, since they have not omitted any opportunity of giving me proof thereof, even beyond all that can be imagined, and have contributed in all things to the welfare and advantage of my affairs."

These preliminary steps the Protector followed up by sending Mr. (afterwards Sir) Samuel Morland on a special mission to the court of Turin. He was charged with strong letters of remonstrance addressed to the duke himself, and ordered to demand an audience for the purpose of expressing the indignation which his treatment of the Vaudois had excited in England. A fitter person for such an embassy than Morland, young, ardent, bold, and conscious of the dignity of the character which he had to sustain as the representative of the Commonwealth, could not have been selected. He obtained an audience at Rivoli, where the duke was then residing, and, in presence of his mother, Madame Royale (daughter of Henry IV.), and the whole court, he addressed him in a Latin speech containing truths which none but a stern republican would have ventured to pour into royal ears—for Cromwell would not consent to hold diplomatic intercourse in any but his own language or that

of ancient Rome.* After a few preliminary expressions of courtesy, he proceeded to notice the deplorable condition of the persecuted Vaudois. The following passage, given in the words of his own quaint translation, serves not only to show the tone of this extraordinary address, but also to confirm the facts previously related.

“In behalf of these poor people, the most serene Protector of England is also become an intercessor; and he most earnestly entreateth and beseecheth your royal highness, that you would be pleased to extend your mercy to these your very poor subjects and most disconsolate outcasts: I mean those who, inhabiting beneath the Alps, and certain valleys under your dominion, are professors of the Protestant religion. For he hath been informed (which no man can say was done by the will of your royal highness,) that part of these most miserable people have been cruelly massacred by your forces, part driven out by violence, and forced to leave their native habitations; and so without house or shelter, poor and destitute of all relief, do wander up and down with their wives and children, in craggý and uninhabitable places and mountains covered with snow. Oh! the fired houses, which are yet smoking, the torn limbs, and ground defiled with blood! *Virgines, post stupra, differto lapillis et ruderibus utero, misere efflarunt animas.*

* In the Appendix to his work, Gilly has given all the letters written in behalf of the Vaudois, and proceeding from the classic pen of Milton.

“Some men, a hundred years old, decrepit with age and bed-ridden, have been burnt in their beds. Some infants have been dashed against the rocks, others have had their throats cut, whose brains have, with more than Cyclopean cruelty, been boiled and eaten by the murderers. What need I mention more, although I could reckon up very many cruelties of the same kind, if I were not astonished at the very thought of them. If all the tyrants of all times and all ages were alive again (which I would speak without offence to your highness, seeing we believe none of these things were done through any default of yours) certainly they would be ashamed when they should find that they had contrived nothing in comparison with these things that might be reputed barbarous and inhuman.

“In the mean time, the angels are surprised with horror; men are amazed; Heaven itself seems to be astonished with the cries of dying men; and the very earth to blush, being discoloured with the gore-blood of so many innocent persons. Do not thou, O thou most high God, do not thou take that revenge which is due to so great wickedness and horrible villanies! Let thy blood, O Christ, wash away this blood!”

These earnest remonstrances, probably reinforced by the destructive partisan warfare which was thinning his troops, induced the duke of Savoy to promise that he would proclaim a general act of indemnity, and restore to the Vaudois their possessions

and the privileges granted by his predecessors. Four ambassadors of the Protestant cantons of Switzerland offered to be the mediators on this occasion; but the only person whom the duke would accept in that character was Louis XIV., as represented by Servient, his ambassador. The Protestant powers, thrown off their guard by the duke's promises, made no objection to this arrangement. The Swiss envoys were invited to meet the deputies of both parties and Servient at Pignerol; and the French diplomatist and his assistants, who had a secret understanding with the duke, contrived so well to mask the nature of his designs, that a treaty was concluded, which Cromwell, in a letter addressed in 1658 to Louis XIV., justly described as "a more concealed course of hostility under the name of peace." The Vaudois and their defenders were led to expect that the fort of La Torre would be demolished: and so it was, but only to be succeeded by another of greater strength and in a more advantageous situation.

Of the state of the Vaudois after this persecution, an affecting picture is drawn by Morland.

"It is my unhappiness," he says, "to leave them where I found them, among the potsherd, with sackcloth and ashes spread under them. To this very day, they labour under most heavy burdens, which are laid on their shoulders by those rigid taskmasters of the Church of Rome. To this very day, do the enemies of the truth plough and make long furrows upon their backs, by robbing them of their

goods and estates ; by banishing their ministers, who are the shepherds of the flock, that the wolves may the better come in and devour them ; by ravishing their young women and maidens ; by murdering many innocent souls ; by cruel mockings and revilings ; by continual menaces of another massacre. What shall I say ? Those very valleys which they inhabit are no other than a prison or dungeon, to which the fort of La Tour serves as door. To all this I must add that, notwithstanding those large supplies which have been sent them from England or foreign states, yet so great is the number of hungry creatures, and so grievous the oppressions of their popish enemies, who lie in wait to bereave them of whatsoever is given them, and snatch at every morsel of meat that goes into their mouths, that verily, ever and anon, they are ready to eat their flesh for want of bread. The tongue of the suckling cleaves to the roof of his mouth, and the young children ask for bread, and no man gives it to them. The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets. Their miseries are more sad and grievous than words can express—they are in a manner dying while they yet live : no grapes in their vineyards, no herds in their stalls, no corn in their garners, no meal in their barrel, no oil in their cruse.”

The intention of the new fort at La Torre soon became evident. A strong garrison stationed there commanded all the valleys, and indulged in the most barbarous excesses. The flight of the Vaudois from

so dangerous a neighbourhood was made a fresh handle for oppression. The fugitives were ordered to return within three days to their dwellings, and to enrol their names at the fort: as well might they have been required to cast themselves into a den of ravenous beasts. Some, who did return to their houses in the vain hope of saving a remnant of their property, were seized and imprisoned in the castle; while the goods of the others, who would not leave their hiding-places, were confiscated. Their applications to the throne were declared inadmissible, if they made any allusions to religion and trade: and when, under the pressure of extreme misery, they framed such a petition as was unobjectionable, it was used, in answer to the interference of the envoy of Berne, to prove that the Vaudois had no longer any complaint to make on the score of religion.

The persecuted Vaudois justly considered the king of France, whose agents had patched up the perfidious treaty of Pignerol as the author of their grievances. To him, therefore, they addressed a petition, humbly imploring his interposition, and beseeching him to see justice done to them. Angry letters from the French ambassador, who had assisted in framing that treaty, were the only reply. He sharply rebuked them for their presumption and discontent, and even reproached them for accepting money and supplies from foreigners—alluding to the contributions transmitted from England. “Alas!” said the wretched sufferers, “was it ever known before that miserable

men, after losing all they possessed, after having had their houses burnt and their goods plundered, should have it objected to them that they had received the charity of those who had pity on them, to prevent their perishing of hunger!"

Cromwell was enraged on learning how completely the Protestant states had been overreached in their negociation with the duke of Savoy, and in the confidence which they had reposed in the mediation of Louis XIV. He wrote to the king in a high tone of indignant remonstrance, and directed Lockhart, his ambassador in Paris, to urge the expediency of an exchange of territory between Louis XIV. and the duke of Savoy, in order that the Vaudois might be placed for ever beyond the iron rule of the latter. The barbarous intolerance of the French monarch, who, during the latter portion of his life, under the sway of popes, priests, and confessors, revoked the edict of Nantes, and in 1686 urged Victor Amedeus to repeat the enormities of his predecessor, renders it doubtful whether this scheme would have proved a relief to those for whose benefit it was designed. In a letter to the Swiss cantons, Cromwell also signified to them his readiness to go all lengths in conjunction with them for the benefit of the Protestants of Piedmont; urging that they were bound by interest as well as sympathy to prevent, by all the means in their power, the most ancient stock of the reformed religion from being destroyed in the remains of its old and faithful professors, lest the next

blow should fall upon themselves. Unfortunately for the Vaudois, in the same year that these letters were written, death deprived them of their most zealous and powerful protector.

It was not to be expected that a licentious profligate like Charles II., who had meanly withheld from the Vaudois the annual pension arising from part of the collection made in England, which Cromwell put out to interest, would exert himself with the spirit and earnestness of the puritanic republican to rescue them from the continued persecution of their sovereign. Even this prince, however, attached as he was to the Romish faith, could not entirely forget what was due from the king of a Protestant nation to the oppressed Waldenses. The copy of a letter still exists, written by him to the Swiss cantons in July, 1662, in which he promises to comply with their request to employ his intercession in behalf of their brethren in the valleys.

The council for the Propagation of the Faith at Turin, the chief cause of the cruelties practised against the Vaudois, were so well satisfied with the effect of the fort of La Torre, that they prevailed on the duke of Savoy to strengthen the garrison and to augment the stores in that of Mirebouc, at the opposite extremity of the valley of Lucerna. The Vaudois were required to transport thither the instruments provided for their own destruction; and the principal persons were at the same time invited to different places to discuss the justice of their complaints.

During the absence of those from whom resistance was most dreaded, the valleys were suddenly inundated, in the beginning of 1663, by a numerous army, under the command of the marquis de Fleuri. The war of fourteen months which ensued was marked, as usual, by treachery and atrocity on the one side, and heroic firmness and perseverance on the other. Never was a fiercer effort made to crush the Vaudois. Fresh troops kept pouring into the country; generals succeeded generals; and treaty after treaty was offered, but in vain, with a view to beguile into a false security men who were not to be conquered by arms. In 1664, the duke of Savoy was glad to avail himself of the pretext of yielding to the remonstrances of the Protestant princes to grant peace to those whom he could not destroy.

In the archives of the State at Turin are preserved copies of no fewer than ten edicts, issued between 1561 and 1686, granting concessions to the Protestant subjects of the house of Savoy, and confirming the free exercise of their religion. One of these concessions, in 1620, was purchased by the poor inhabitants of the valleys, at an expense of 6000 crowns. In spite of these solemn immunities, Victor Amedeus published, on the 31st of January, 1686, a decree, commanding every Protestant church and chapel to be demolished, and every professor of that faith to make a public renunciation of it, within fifteen days from the date of the proclamation, upon penalty of banishment. All remonstrances made against this

cruel decree by the Vaudois themselves, and in the name of the Protestant States, were alike ineffectual.

The whole population of the Protestant valleys at this time did not exceed 15,000 persons; of these only 2500 were capable of bearing arms: taken unprepared, and but scantily provided with resources of any kind for resisting an attack, they were driven to desperation. "Death rather than the mass!" was shouted from mountain to mountain; the vales re-echoed with the cry; and they determined to defy the threats of their persecutors. The king of France, who had urged on the duke of Savoy to carry fire and sword into the Protestant villages, assailed those poor people with his troops from the French frontier, while an armed force marched against them from Turin. Hostilities commenced in April, 1686, and enemies from all quarters poured in upon their prey. The French general, Catinat, wrote to the duke of Savoy that he would have "the honour of striking the first blow at the heretics." He did so; "but," says Henri Arnaud, one of the ministers, and the military leader of the Vaudois, who has written a history of this sanguinary invasion, "he had the honour of being well beat." The Vaudois gallantly withstood the first shock of war; and for three days were victorious in every engagement. At length, they were compelled, by the overwhelming number of their invaders, to submit; but not before such horrible devastation had been carried into every hamlet, and such unheard-of barbarities committed upon all ages, even upon women

and infants, that it would be outraging human nature to recount them.

The survivors were given to understand that they should experience the clemency of the sovereign if they would submit unconditionally. They did submit; and Victor Amedeus, in his mercy, commanded their lands, houses, and property to be seized and divided among his troops and the most zealous of their Catholic persecutors. He then consigned the whole of the Protestant population to prison. The jails in his dominions were in consequence so crowded with these wretched people, that they perished by hundreds of hunger, thirst, and infectious diseases. It would be difficult to describe all the miseries and calamities which these prisoners suffered during their captivity; and they were more or less ill treated, according to the humours of those who had the command of their prisons. They had nothing but bread and water for their ordinary food; the one without substance, and the other from the kennels in the streets. In some places, they were supplied with water only at certain times, and that in such small quantity that many perished. They slept on the bare bricks, or, if they were allowed straw, it was rotten and full of vermin: and the dungeons were thronged almost to suffocation. The numbers who died every day were replaced by fresh prisoners; and the intense heat of the summer, and the corruption with which the rooms were infected, owing to the

great number of the sick, engendered diseases too horrible for recital.*

In six months, 3000 only of the sufferers were alive; and for these the Protestant ambassadors at the court of Turin made such urgent intercession, that the duke of Savoy was again constrained to exercise his *clemency*. He was pleased to pardon and release them, on condition that they should banish themselves for ever from their homes and country.

The wretched exiles set out destitute upon their melancholy journey, after having, in many instances, their children forcibly taken from them for the purpose of being brought up in the Catholic religion. Their pastors were separated from the people, and in this condition they were obliged to make their way across the mountains, and direct their steps towards Switzerland. The weather was unusually severe, and hundreds perished on the road of cold and hunger. A remnant providentially escaped. Some continued their pilgrimage to more distant countries, and joined the French Protestant churches in London, Berlin, and the United Provinces. About 2000 remained in Switzerland; and, three years afterwards, an intrepid band of 800 of these exiles put themselves under the command of Arnaud, determined to regain their valleys at the point of the sword, or to perish upon their native soil. The manner in which this enterprise was

* Hist. of Vaudois, by Peter Boyer. London, 1692.

successfully accomplished, in spite of difficulties and dangers apparently insuperable, the leader himself relates in the "*Glorieuse Rentrée des Vaudois dans leurs Vallées.*"* They reached the fastnesses of the dreary district which had once been their home, and there maintained themselves until the dissolution of the alliance between Louis XIV. and the duke of Savoy. The latter then consented to recall their brethren in exile, and to reinstate them all in their former possessions, upon condition of their serving under his banners against France. This condition was gladly accepted. When he received the first deputation of the Vaudois after this reconciliation, he observed: "We have hitherto been enemies; let us henceforth be good friends. Others were the occasion of your misfortunes."

The duke indeed had on this occasion been but the simple tool of that ambitious and sanguinary bigot, Louis XIV. Arnaud himself admits as much. "The French," says he, "artfully insinuated that the duke of Savoy ought to imitate the zeal of Louis XIV. in destroying the churches of the Vaudois and forcing them to embrace the Catholic religion." The author of *Novum Thesaurum Pedemontii* distinctly asserts that Louis, aware of the loyalty of the Vaudois to their sovereign, instigated the persecution, lest they

* A translation of Arnaud's history, with a compendious History of the Vaudois, by Hugh Dyke Acland, was published in 1827.

should endanger his rear while prosecuting his designs on Piedmont from Pignerol, his point d'appui.

The conduct of these Vaudois troops in the war which ensued with France commanded the applause of all who witnessed it. Formed into a distinct regiment under officers of their own faith and country, they contributed greatly to several important victories.

In 1706, when Victor Amedeus became a fugitive from his capital, which was invested by a French army, whither did he flee for refuge? To the valleys of the Vaudois. The relentless persecutor found, at the village of Rora, a safe asylum among the very people whom he had formerly hunted down, robbed of their all, consigned to death in loathsome dungeons, and expelled from their country, for no other crime than refusing to abandon the religious faith of their forefathers. And what was the reward of their loyalty and fidelity? One writer* tells us that to the family in whose house he had found shelter, he granted the *invaluable* privilege of having an inclosed burial-place; and another† relates that “the family of Durand Canton of Rora,” possibly the same that has just been alluded to, “preserves to this day a silver goblet left by his highness as a token of their forefathers’ loyalty;” and he adds that, “throughout

* Gilly’s Narrative, 4to. p. 58.

† H.D. Acland, Glorious Recovery by the Vaudois of their Valleys, p. 209.

his protracted conflicts, the duke continued his approbation of their conduct and his protestations of interest in their welfare." Such was the extent of popish gratitude for the most important services rendered by heretics!

About the year 1726 this same prince, now become king of Sardinia, directed the governor of Pignerol to receive an oath of allegiance from this well-trying portion of his subjects, and to promise them on his part security in their valleys. But he sent also an order diminishing the extent of their country, and banishing those not born within the new limits—no inconsiderable number, as many foreign Protestants had upon his invitation united themselves with the Vaudois, after their recovery of the valleys. The exiles proceeded through Savoy to Switzerland, with an order on the commissariat for bread, which was taken from them on Mount Cenis by couriers whom the king sent for that purpose. The Vallenses of Wirtemberg are the descendants of these victims of treacherous ingratitude.

From that time, these unoffending people have been, as ever, distinguished by unimpeachable loyalty to their sovereigns, exemplary resignation under heavy oppression, and stedfast adherence to their faith and to the practices which it inculcates.

When the events of the Revolution led to the incorporation of Piedmont with France, the Vaudois were for the first time put into possession of their birth-right, and placed on an equal footing with the Catho-

lies. A gleam of prosperity passed over the valleys ; and Napoleon granted a provision of 1200 francs per annum to each of their pastors. Of these substantial benefits pastors and people were deprived by the restoration of the *legitimate* sovereign, the king of Sardinia, in 1814, when they were again subjected to the same oppressive restrictions under which they had formerly languished. The government allowance to the pastors was cut off, and the families of these faithful servants of God were reduced for some time to such extreme necessity as to depend for subsistence on the charity of their neighbours. At the urgent remonstrance of the Prussian and Belgian ministers, Victor Amedeus deigned to bestow a pension of 500 francs on each ; but, says Gilly, a sum exceeding this income is levied by an extraordinary tax on the Vaudois.

Since Cromwell's time, British beneficence has been more than once extended to the poor population of the Valleys. In compensation for the cruel seizure by Charles II. of a portion of the fund raised for them by the Protector, his niece Mary, consort of William III., granted them a yearly pension of £425 ; the payment of which, soon afterwards interrupted, was renewed, and the amount increased to £500, by queen Anne, at the instance of archbishop Sharpe. This sum was regularly issued from the Exchequer till 1807, under the name of the royal bounty ; but it had not been actually received by the Vaudois, for some years previously to that period, owing to the difficulties of transmission and other causes.

In 1768, George III., by letters patent, empowered the Vaudois to solicit contributions in aid of their ministers, churches, schools, and poor; and his Majesty directed the amount of this collection to be paid into the hands of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and by them invested in government securities, the interest of which should be appropriated to the religious uses of the Protestant inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont. This sum has been since raised to £10,000, 3 per cent. Bank Annuities, out of which regular stipends are paid to the thirteen pastors of those valleys, besides small allowances to the widows of deceased ministers.

Including these and similar aids from England and Holland, the highest fixed and certain income on which any of these ministers can depend falls short of £45 per year.

By another public collection, made for the benefit of the Vaudois, in 1824 and the following years, several thousand pounds were raised in this country, and vested in our funds. The interest is applied, half-yearly, to specific purposes, chiefly to the maintenance of an hospital in the valley of La Tour, to the establishment of new schools, and to the assistance of young persons intended for the ministry. To the same objects is devoted the produce of contributions from Prussia, Holland, and Switzerland.

This Italian Protestant church, seated in the three valleys of Lucerna, Perusa, and St. Martin, comprehends about 20,000 souls, in thirteen parishes, with

the same number of ministers. For a picture of the deplorable state of bondage to which these patient sufferers are again reduced by popish intolerance, I shall have recourse to a writer whose testimony will have the more weight, when it is known that he is not only a native of Piedmont, but also a Roman Catholic, Count dal Pozzo, whose intimate practical knowledge of facts was acquired in the various high offices which he successively held in his own country.

“The Protestant inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont,” says this writer, “even since the sanguinary persecutions ceased, have always lived under restrictions, and been subjected to incapacities, that can scarcely be conceived. They were obliged to abide strictly in their valleys; they could not dwell or acquire property but within certain limits: they were forbidden to have more than a certain number of schools, and churches, and enclosed cemeteries. A Protestant minister could not visit a sick person beyond the fixed limits, unless he were accompanied by a secular Catholic, nor stay there more than twenty-four hours. In the parish of St. John, though it contained a great number of Protestants, they were not permitted to have either church or school, and the Protestant minister was not allowed to pass the night there: mixed marriages were strictly forbidden. If they went to fairs or markets in the neighbouring districts, they could not have either houses, shops, or rooms in those places. Whatever might be the disproportion between the Protestant

and Catholic population of a commune, (and in several communes the former were beyond comparison the more numerous) the communal administration was always to comprehend more Catholics than Protestants; so that very often Catholics, who were utter strangers to the commune, were hunted up—wretches for whom it was afterwards necessary to provide decent clothing at the expense of the commune.

“By the union of Piedmont with France, the Vaudois were completely *emancipated*. Here the word is much more apposite than when applied to the Irish Catholics: for this was a real state of servitude, or nearly approaching to it, since so many civil rights were wholly or partially withheld from them. On the restoration of the Sardinian government, though the treaty of Paris of the 31st of May, 1814, had declared that, ‘in the countries restored or ceded by this treaty’—and the valleys of the Protestant Vaudois were in this predicament—‘no individual, of whatever class or condition he might be, should be persecuted, annoyed, or disturbed, in person or property,’ which provision appeared to guarantee all existing rights—the Vaudois were nevertheless confined within their ancient limits, and reduced to their former state of servitude, not only within sight of the Congress of Vienna, which paid little regard to the welfare of individuals and small populations, and, what is still more astonishing, within sight of England, who always proved herself, espe-

cially in Cromwell's time, the protectress of the Vaudois, and who had so fair an occasion to insist that the king of Sardinia, whose restoration and aggrandizement (by the incorporation of Genoa) were principally owing to her intervention, should leave them in possession of the rights which they had enjoyed for more than fifteen years, without their having attempted to spread their doctrines, or to make proselytes, without their having in any way annoyed either the Catholic religion or the state. It was a great neglect in Lord Castlereagh, that he did not insist on the introduction of one little article into the treaty of Paris, or into the acts of the congress of Vienna, in behalf of these poor Vaudois.

“It is true that the king of Sardinia, by letters patent of the 27th February, 1826, in which he professed his ‘wish to moderate the rigour of the measures adopted in former times in regard to them,’ granted merely the following mitigations:—1. That they should be permitted to retain the possessions which they had acquired during the time of the French domination, beyond the limits fixed in the ancient edicts; 2dly, that they should be allowed to carry on any art or trade they pleased, as also the professions of surgeon, apothecary, architect, land-surveyor, or any other that does not require the degree of doctor: so that they cannot be either advocates or physicians, or—as the ancient regulations remain in force, or rather have been revived, in regard to every thing not mentioned in these

letters patent—attain a higher rank in the army than that of sergeant.

“There is, methinks, a great difference between the truly miserable condition of these Vaudois, and that of the Irish, which many Catholics of the continent would deem enviable; a difference which must convince those who fancy that an equal freedom of religion is established every where but in the British dominions, that they are egregiously mistaken.”*

On this subject, Gilly most justly remarks, in his interesting work, that the barbarous edicts in force against the Vaudois are a disgrace to the nineteenth century, and well may he add that, if the following grievances could not be authenticated by indisputable evidence, their existence, at the present day, would appear incredible. At the risk of some repetitions, I subjoin his statement, because it serves to confirm and complete that of the count Dal Pozzo.

No Protestant can inherit or purchase land beyond

* I beg the reader to recollect that this was written before the admission of papists to seats in the legislature. It is not a little gratifying to have so decided a declaration of an honest Catholic, to place against the insidious insinuation of the Protestant, Raumer, who, after bestowing a few lines on the oppressive restrictions still imposed on the Waldenses, exclaims, “Let us remember Ireland!” as if to intimate that, in 1840, the Irish Catholics were liable to the same or worse hardships than the Protestant inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont. Surely, Raumer must have learned this candour from the papists themselves, or from their allies of the Whig-Radical school! See Raumer’s *Italy*, i., 222.

the limitations of the Clusone and Pelice. No books of instruction or devotion, for the use of Protestants, may be printed in Piedmont, and an enormous duty is imposed upon their importation. No Vaudois may practise as a physician, surgeon, apothecary, attorney, or advocate, unless among his own community, and within the limits.

Even in the communes of the three valleys there may not be a majority of Protestants: for example, three of the five syndics must be Catholics. This is a crying evil in such places as Bobbio and San Giovanni, where the Protestants are as 1,700 to 40, and the Catholic population of the lowest order, so that the very refuse of the people must sometimes be nominated, to keep within the letter of the law. The Protestants are obliged to observe the Catholic festivals, and to abstain from work on those days. It is easy to conceive how excessive must be this hardship, when it is known that there is one holiday at least in every week, sometimes two or three; so that the Protestant peasant has never more than five days in the week for labour, and sometimes only three. The sabbath he keeps with scrupulous observance, while the Catholic cares not for violating it. Take into account, too, that fifteen sous a day in the winter, and twenty in the summer, is the utmost that a peasant can earn. While the Catholics pay a land-tax of 13 per cent., the Protestants have to pay $20\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Gilly further informs us that none of the Vaudois

are exempt from the military conscription, and that all of them, not excepting their pastors, are liable to serve as common soldiers. He cites the case of M. Peyrot, the pastor of Rora, who was drawn in the conscription of 1821; in vain he urged his sacred character and pastoral duties; his remonstrances were of no avail; he was too poor to pay a substitute, and a peremptory order arrived, commanding him to join his regiment immediately. The interposition of the Prussian ambassador, general count Truchsess, was solicited and obtained. M. Peyrot was released, not as a clergyman, but with a pretended understanding, on the part of the war-office, that he was beyond the age prescribed for military service.

“Are we now to assume,” concludes Dal Pozzo, “that this intolerance towards the Vaudois is the effect of a malevolent disposition of the Sardinian government itself? By no means. Never was there a milder or more benevolent sovereign than Victor Emanuel, under whom this system of intolerance and severity resumed its ancient course. The Sardinian government, guided, or rather impelled, into this course, by the court of Rome, and by the Jesuits, regards intolerance as a duty; and, since the influence of the latter has gained greater ascendancy in Piedmont, this intolerance, instead of being abated, as it has been alleged, by the march of civilization and the spirit of the times—in spite of the intercession of different Protestant courts, which

interest themselves in favour of the Vaudois, an intercession which formerly saved them from complete extermination—this intolerance, I say, is greatly aggravated. It is not long since eight Protestants of the valleys, settled in Turin, were ordered to retire to their valleys, by virtue of an edict of 1622, which had fallen into desuetude, but is again put in force. This rigorous measure of the Sardinian government is alleged to have been adopted at the express requisition of the court of Rome, made at the instigation of the bishop of Pignerol.”

VI. PERSECUTIONS IN FRANCE, 1560—1572,

PRIOR TO THE MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

The doctrines of the Reformation preached by Luther, found, on their first promulgation, illustrious patronage in France. Renée, duchess of Ferrara, daughter of Louis XII., a princess of strong mind, listened with attention to the preachers of the new doctrines; but, as the proximity of her husband's dominions to Rome made him fearful of exciting the temporal as well as spiritual wrath of his neighbour, the duchess was obliged to conceal her sentiments during his life. On becoming a widow, she returned to France, residing at the castle of Montargis, near Paris, where, in times of persecution, she constantly afforded an asylum to the Protestants, who are said by Pasquier to have been denominated Hugonots, from their having first met at Hugon's Tower, in Tours. A second derivation from the German word *Eidgenossen* appears to me too far-fetched.

Another eminent patroness of the new opinions was the queen of Navarre, sister of Francis I., who,

without herself adopting those opinions, screened their professors in her dominions from the cruel death which awaited them in France. Her sentiments, however, gradually underwent so great a change, that the constable Montmorency, conversing with the king on the means of extirpating heresy, declared that, if he wished to put it down in France, he must begin with the court and his relatives, particularly naming the queen his sister. "Say no more of that," replied Francis; "she loves me too well to think otherwise than I approve of."

In 1520, Olevitane, one of the people called Waldenses, published a translation of the Bible into French. Bucer and Melanchthon had previously visited France, where the reformed doctrines made such progress that a congregation was formed at Meaux, and the Popish clergy, in alarm, urgently remonstrated with the king and so successfully, that, from being favourably disposed towards the Reformation, he became its zealous persecutor. In 1523, an edict was published against the heretics, and the congregation at Meaux was dispersed. Its minister, Jean Leclerc, after suffering horrible tortures, was burned alive. Many others were put to the same cruel death; and when Dymond Levoy, with five others, was burned in 1528, Francis I., accompanied by a procession of priests and monks, went bareheaded to witness the execution. Exulting in the success of this murderous zeal of the priests, seconded by the royal authority, they instituted a

yearly procession, to give thanks to the Almighty for having enabled them to get rid of the heretics.

Jean Cauvin, or Calvin, a native of Picardy, who had received his religious instruction from his kinsman, Olivetane, was meanwhile preaching about Bourges and Ligneres; but, to save his life, he retired from France, and became the head of the Protestant Church at Geneva. There he wrote his *Christian Institutes*, which he dedicated to Francis I., imploring his compassion for the reformers. Cardinal Tournon represented to the king that the dedication of such a work was an insult to royalty and to the religion of his ancestors. The book served rather to inflame than to damp the ardour of persecution in the breast of the king; and, at the cruel suggestion of the clergy, he issued fresh orders for punishing the Hugonots wherever they were to be found. People were employed to hunt them out. It was declared to be a crime to pray in French; numbers of pious persons of both sexes were burned alive; and, as the speeches of these martyrs at the stake proved powerful means of conversion, care was taken to prevent them from addressing the spectators.

Such was the state of the French Protestants on the accession of Henry II., in 1547. The system of persecution continued to be vigorously followed up. The Hugonots were not to be deterred even by the certainty of martyrdom from following the dictates of their consciences. To no purpose were fires kin-

dled in every town in France ; the Protestants persisted in holding their religious meetings and in professing their doctrines. To give greater importance to these executions, the young king attended several of them in person. At his return to Paris, fires were blazing in different parts of the city ; and, as he passed one of these piles, he beheld an old servant of his expiring in the flames. Filled with horror, he retired immediately to his palace, to conceal his agitation and remorse.

The court and nobility of France were at this time divided into four great parties, the heads of which were the constable de Montmorency, the house of Guise, the king's mistress Diane de Poitiers duchess of Valentinois, and Catherine de Medicis, the queen-mother. These were all intent on extending their influence and enriching themselves and their connexions, for which purpose they employed every kind of manœuvre to deceive the king, whose authority was in a great measure laid aside during the struggle. It was the mutual opposition and jealousy of these parties that produced the long series of wars by which France was torn during the remainder of the sixteenth century.

The family of Guise, consisting of the six sons of the first duke of that name, a younger branch of the house of Lorraine, had attained in a few years to a height of fortune and power, and manifested an ambition, which caused Francis I. to view their conduct with a jealous eye. It possessed in its head

one of the greatest military captains of the age; another of its members was the cardinal of Lorraine, archbishop of Rheims and metropolitan of France, and a third the cardinal of Guise. The insatiable avidity with which this family strove to monopolize all the high offices in church and state, was commemorated in a quatrain at that time very common in France, purporting that king Francis was right enough when he foretold that the Guises would strip his sons to their doublets and his subjects to their shirts. It, therefore, behoved Henry to keep them as much as possible out of power. As the plea for every act of this party was the defence of the Catholic religion, it had of course all the clergy for its supporters.

At length it suited the political views of the cardinal of Lorraine to suspend the horrible persecution of the Protestants, because he was desirous of engaging the king in a war with the emperor, Charles V. An edict was therefore published, in 1551, which, by placing the Calvinists under the secular jurisdiction, abated the violence of the proceedings against them: this was called the edict of Chateaubriant.

No sooner was the charge of heresy submitted by this decree to the cognizance of the parliament of Paris than the Protestants experienced a great improvement in their condition. The inutility of executions was so evident to this court, that the rigour of the law was suspended. Taking advantage of

this period of indulgence, the Calvinists erected a church; and the enemies of toleration had recourse to every artifice they could devise to excite the hatred of the populace and the vengeance of the government against the followers of the reformed religion. Through the influence of the cardinal of Lorraine, they obtained an edict, which again enabled them to wreak their fury upon the Protestants.

One expedient for depriving them of the indulgent interpretation of the edict of Chateaubriant was the appointment of an Inquisitor of the Faith in France. To that office the Pope appointed Matthew Orri, a Dominican monk. He was authorized to cite before him all heretics, to interrogate, and to condemn them. By means of a secret police, he was enabled to penetrate into the privacy of families, and by a numerous band of spies to ascertain the religious opinions of every individual. The bishops themselves were disgusted with the grant of such authority, and remonstrated against it; but the king's council approved the plan, and it was very soon presented to the parliament in the form of an edict.

The odious tendency of the proceeding excited the indignation of the parliament; and Seguier, one of its presidents, was directed to remonstrate against it before the king in council. This he did in a speech which made so deep an impression that Henry deferred the affair to a further examination. Though the government persisted in the measure and the Inquisitor was appointed, the Reformation continued

to make astonishing progress, not entirely owing to the greater purity of its doctrines, but partly from a political motive. The government had manifested a determination to support the Catholic religion in every possible way : in consequence, all who felt dissatisfied with the ministers were tempted, out of spite, to join the ranks of its professed enemies. On the other hand, a very considerable number of the nobility actually belonging to the court of Henry II., induced by curiosity to attend the reformed service, principally because it was forbidden, were seriously affected by what they heard, and some openly professed themselves Protestants. Thus, notwithstanding Henry's zeal for Popery, he was surrounded by Calvinists.

A riot, which took place in May, 1557, plainly proclaimed the hostile disposition of the Catholics. Four hundred Protestants had met one evening to partake of the Lord's Supper, at a house in the Rue St. Jacques, opposite to the College Plessis. A mob of their enemies, collected about the house, made no attempt to interrupt the service ; but, when the congregation prepared to leave the place and return home, they were assailed with such abuse and threats as to be convinced that their lives were in danger. The darkness of the night would have favoured the escape of most of them, had not lanterns been placed in the windows of the neighbouring houses. Many were murdered : some few, who were armed, succeeded in cutting their way through the crowd ; but there were still left some old people and women, who

must have been slaughtered, but for the appearance of a magistrate and a party of soldiers, who took them into custody to the number of two hundred. The mob then dispersed.

Proceedings were immediately commenced against the prisoners, some of whom were persons of high family connexions. The cardinal of Lorraine insisted on the condemnation of them all; but the parliament was less bloodthirsty: after a long process and considerable delay, five of the number were condemned and burned on the 13th of September. The Elector Palatine solicited the release of the other prisoners; and Henry, who needed the assistance of that prince, ordered them to be treated with moderation, to the infinite regret of Pope Paul IV., who loudly complained on the subject in the Consistory.

The cardinal of Lorraine, taking advantage of the increased influence which his brother had acquired by his military successes, now persuaded the king to establish the Inquisition by edict. Three Inquisitors General were appointed: these were the cardinal of Lorraine, the cardinal of Bourbon, brother of the king of Navarre, and the cardinal of Chatillon, who were empowered to inflict capital punishment on all persons found guilty of heresy. As this edict proceeded from the king himself in a bed of justice, the parliament could not well refuse to register it; but they mitigated its severity by allowing all laymen an appeal from such a tribunal. The power of life and death was thus once more snatched from the clergy,

although at the States-general they had given a million crowns to induce the king to grant their wishes. On the other hand, an edict was issued, forbidding the judges to commute sentence of death and confiscation of property passed upon any person convicted either of heresy, or of having brought into France books against the Catholic religion printed at Geneva.

But neither ordinances nor prohibitions could check the extension of the Protestant opinions; and, as numbers impart confidence, many, who had hitherto been restrained by their rank, now declared themselves Hugonots. Among these the most eminent was Antoine de Bourbon, first prince of the blood, and king of Navarre, in right of his wife Jeanne d'Albret, who had early imbibed the doctrines of the Reformation from her mother Margaret, sister of Francis I. His brother, the prince of Condé, likewise joined the Protestant party; both being probably influenced to this step by their enmity to the Guises. Converts were made among all classes, in the capital and in the provinces, at court, in the army, and even in the tribunals, hitherto inaccessible to heresy. The Popish clergy thought it high time to bestir themselves; and the cardinal of Lorraine prevailed upon the king to hold a bed of justice, when he might appear to consult the counsellors of the parliament on the measures expedient to be taken with the hereticks, and thus draw from them, if possible, such indi-

cations of their secret sentiments as might serve to prove their own apostacy from the Catholic faith.

In pursuance of this perfidious advice, Henry repaired unexpectedly to the parliament, and, in his address, couched in mild and courteous language, declared himself free from all angry feelings towards those of its members who had adopted the reformed opinions ; begging them all to speak out freely, and to recommend what each thought best for the pacification of the kingdom. The counsellors fell into the snare. Many of them advocated the cause of justice and humanity ; and, pointing out the danger of continuing a useless rigour towards a party which had become so numerous, they urged the policy of adopting milder measures. Dubourg, Faur, and two or three others, expressed themselves with such frankness, that, on leaving the hall, the king ordered the captain of his guards to seize and conduct them to prison. He likewise directed that these counsellors should be brought to trial immediately, especially Dubourg, whom he was desirous to see burnt with his own eyes.

The arrest of the counsellors was followed by the apprehension of all known Protestants, and the prisons were filled with persons accused of heresy. The destruction of the reformed religion was resolved upon ; and the remonstrances of the ambassadors of several Protestant princes of Germany were treated with supreme contempt. Nothing but the death of the king, from a wound received at a tournament

held in honour of his daughter's marriage with Philip II. of Spain, saved the Hugonots from the impending storm. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Francis II., then no more than sixteen years of age.

The young king, feeble in mind and constitution, was entirely governed by his wife, Mary queen of Scots, niece to the Guises, through whose means that ambitious family was restored to power, while the constable de Montmorency, who had possessed paramount influence over Henry II., was exiled from the court. The two Chatillons, better known by their seignorial appellations of Coligny and Andelot, were nephews of Montmorency. The former, a man of consummate valour and prudence, had, through the interest of his uncle, been appointed Admiral of France, a distinction conferred in those days on military commanders. At the beginning of the new reign, the admiral Coligny and his brother openly joined the Protestants, and induced many other persons of distinction to do the same. The king of Navarre became the head of the party, which resolved to resist the tyranny of the Guises by force.

A few days after the death of Henry II., the unfortunate Dubourg was declared a heretic, condemned to be hanged, and his body burnt. He was executed on the 23rd of December, 1559. His firmness excited great sympathy in the spectators, whom he was prevented from addressing; for the executioner had orders to gag him if he attempted to speak. At the foot of the gibbet he refused to kiss

a crucifix which was presented to him, and was immediately pulled up and strangled, amidst shouts from the mob of "Jesu Maria."

Francis II. was king only in name, the royal authority being in the hands of the cardinal of Lorraine, and his brother, the duke of Guise. The most active measures were adopted for the extermination of heretics. The cardinal instituted a commission for trying and condemning them, while a legion of spies, dispersed through Paris, daily swelled the number of the victims. The cruel spirit of the bigoted and ambitious churchman produced a general feeling of horror, and the Protestants had no resource left but resistance. A plan for seizing the Guises at Blois, in which none of the principal leaders of the Protestants were concerned, only served by its total failure to injure their cause, and to afford a pretext to their enemies to charge them with a conspiracy against the life of the king. The most sanguinary vengeance was wreaked on all those of the discomfited party who fell into the hands of their adversaries, and who were forthwith hanged, "booted and spurred," says one of the historians of these deplorable times.

Through the influence of the new chancellor, Michael de l'Hopital, an enlightened advocate of toleration, the States-general were summoned to meet at Orleans in 1560; and it was resolved that a national council should be held, to discuss the great question of liberty of conscience, and to settle the religious disputes by which the kingdom was dis-

tracted. The Bourbon princes were ordered to attend the States-general, upon pain of being treated as criminals. No sooner had the prince of Condé arrived at Orleans, than he was apprehended, and charged with having been concerned in the conspiracy of Amboise. At the same time, the king of Navarre and the Chatillons were so closely watched, that they could scarcely be said to be at liberty. The prince was brought to trial before the parliament of Paris and the peers, and condemned to be beheaded. The king of Navarre made great efforts to save his brother's life, not aware that his own was in, perhaps, still more imminent danger. The duke of Guise had formed a plan for murdering him in the chamber of the king, and even obtained the consent of Francis to its execution. Warned of his danger, Navarre, when summoned to the king's presence, at first refused to go; having been told that, on a sign from the king, the assassins would fall upon him. Not till a third summons did he comply. "I will go," said he to one of his gentlemen, "and I will fight as long as I have breath. If I fall, take my shirt stained with my blood; carry it to my son, and tell him to give up his life rather than the desire of avenging me." Francis durst not commit so foul a crime; the signal was not given, and Navarre retired unharmed; while Guise, mortified to see him escape, exclaimed with rage, when he found that the king would not consent to the murder, "O le lache! O le poltron."

No intreaties could move the king to pardon his

kinsman. The Guises urged his execution, and Condé would infallibly have been brought to the block, but for the illness which terminated the life of Francis II. in December, 1560. The queen-mother, Catherine de Medicis, assumed the Regency during the minority of his successor, Charles IX., a child only ten years old. That wily princess, deeming it prudent to conciliate the Bourbon princes, as a counterpoise to the overweening ambition of the Guises, released Condé, who was declared innocent of the charges on which he had been condemned. The king of Navarre was appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom; but, to the astonishment of his fellow-protestants, he was persuaded to desert them, and to join the Romish communion.

The protection extended by the queen to the Protestants enabled them to propagate their doctrines with success. According to Maimbourg, (*Hist. de Calvinisme*, liv. 3) Catherine extended this protection so far as to permit ministers of the reformed religion to preach in the prince's apartments, and even in her own, (as we are told by Madame de Mornai) when she was at dinner; while a Jacobin, who preached the Lent sermons at Fontainebleau, had no congregation. Meat was eaten at table every day all through Lent, and the whole court appeared to have turned Calvinist. The Catholics loudly exclaimed against the authorities for permitting the meetings of the Hugonots, and even proceeded, where they were superior in number, to acts of violence:

the Protestants made reprisals, and the whole kingdom appeared to be rent by one extensive feud. On the joint solicitation of the admiral and the chancellor, the queen summoned a meeting of députies from all the parliaments of France, to be held at St. Germain; and it was there decreed that the Protestants should restore all the Catholic churches which they had seized; submit to the payment of tithes and other ecclesiastical impositions; have a right to meet unarmed outside the towns, for the exercise of their religion; gentlemen alone being allowed to go armed. Their ministers were forbidden to make disparaging remarks on the Catholic religion and ceremonies, to hold any synod without permission from the court, to travel from town to town to preach, and required to confine themselves to one church. It was understood that these privileges were only granted provisionally, until the decision of a general council.

The passing of this edict was a triumph to the Calvinists, while the Papists received it in gloomy silence. Most of the parliaments registered it without difficulty, but that of Paris yielded only after two formal commands from the court. The prince of Condé now made a public profession of Protestantism; many people of rank followed his example; and the number of persons who resorted to the religious service of the Calvinists soon amounted to fifty thousand.

The rage of the popish party, inflamed by the

spread of Hugonot principles, was not long to be repressed. Maledictions and menaces were launched from their pulpits, and exhortations to destroy the objects of their curse speedily followed. Wherever the Catholics were in sufficient force, and not restrained by the authorities, many Protestants were sacrificed by them. Those of Paris wrote to the duke of Guise, who had retired to Lorraine, begging him to come to their assistance, as the queen seemed to have allied herself more closely with the Hugonots. In compliance with the summons, he set out with a numerous suite, which, as he proceeded, increased to a little army.

Arriving at Vassy, a small town in Champagne, just at the time when the Hugonots were attending divine service, he expressed great indignation, and went to church to hear mass. A small party followed him; the rest, hastening to the place where the Protestants had assembled, commenced an attack upon them by gross insults and abusive language, which soon led to blows. The strife was bloody: Guise's people, rushing into the meeting-house sword in hand, fell upon the congregation. Women, children, and aged persons, were their first victims. The duke, being apprized of the tumult, left the church for the purpose of appeasing it; but was unfortunately struck on the cheek by a stone. The sight of his blood increased the rage of his followers; and, while he retired to a little distance to have his slight wound dressed, they renewed the slaughter,

sparing neither age nor sex, destroying the pulpit, and burning the books. It is related that more than eighty persons were killed on this occasion; indeed, Anquetil states that "the carnage ceased only on account of the multitude of the killed and wounded."

Most Catholic writers, with that bold defiance of truth which Papists never scruple to show wherever the interest of their religion is involved, are anxious to represent the Protestants as the aggressors. Tavannes, however, is an exception: in his *Memoirs* (p. 247) he relates that "Guise arrived at Vassy while they were at preaching, seized the minister, and killed several of the congregation, and his soldiers plundered the rest." The king himself was made an instrument for bringing odium upon the suffering party; he was actually persuaded to issue letters patent, dated April 30, 1562, for "an inquiry into the violences, aggressions, and excesses committed at Vassy by some of the new religion *against the person of the duke of Guise!*" The public voice, however, proved more impartial, when it afterwards gave to Guise, who seems to have taken no pains to prevent this atrocious massacre, the title of "the Butcher of Vassy."

Similar atrocities were committed at Cahors, Toulouse, Sens, Amiens, and Tours. In the latter town, three hundred Protestants were shut up without food for three days, then bound together two and two, and led to a slaughter-house, where they were put to death in different ways. At Sens, the bells of the

cathedral for three successive days summoned the inhabitants to murder the Hugonots. The bodies of the victims, floating down the Seine, seemed, as they passed the royal residence, to demand justice on their persecutors; one party called for justice, the other clamoured for the extermination of the heretics.

The news of these massacres excited general indignation. The Protestants complained loudly of the infringement of the edict in their favour, and deputed Condé to present their remonstrances to the king. Catherine promised them full satisfaction, without any intention of affording it. Perceiving that their destruction would be gradually effected by their enemies, in spite of edicts, they justly concluded that open war would be preferable to such a state of things. It is probable, however, that they might have deferred for some time longer the final resort to arms, had not the queen written to Condé and Coligny, soliciting the assistance of the Protestants against the Guises. Numbers of Hugonots assembled from all parts of France, but, before they were ready to act, their enemies had seized Catherine and her son, and carried them to Paris. This success was followed by fresh persecutions of the Hugonots in the capital. They were driven out of their meeting-houses; and Montmorency, the governor, went with troops to the suburbs, broke open their places of worship, and destroyed and burned the pulpits and benches. He then returned to the city, amidst the

acclamations of the populace, who hailed him with the title of Captain *Brulebancs*.

The queen, very soon after her arrival at Paris, renewed her solicitations for succour to the Protestants, assuring their leader, the prince of Condé, that upon him and his followers rested her only hope of preventing her enemies from depriving her of the government. They were not backward in answering this appeal; and in a short time gained possession of Orleans, Lyons, Bourges, Vienne, Valence, Nismes, Montauban, Rouen, and many other towns. They were masters of the whole of the Orleannois, and all Normandy declared in their favour: numbers of gentlemen with their dependents joined their standard, and Condé was soon at the head of an army of six thousand men. Meanwhile, the king in council confirmed the edict of January, 1562, which allowed the Protestants the free exercise of their religion throughout France, excepting Paris and the court. The mask, however, was soon thrown off; for when, at a conference held in June, at a small town in the Orleannois, between the queen and the Protestant chiefs, the latter wished to ascertain Catherine's real intentions in regard to them, she declared without disguise that, considering the constitution of the kingdom, no solid peace could be expected so long as attempts should be made to establish any other religion than the Romish; that the edict of January had been the signal for all the disturbances, and therefore that edict must be rescinded, and the Hugonots be content with the pri-

vate performance of divine worship—this unreserved profession of hostility to the object which they had nearest at heart, from a princess for whose assistance and defence they had taken arms, excited not less surprise than resentment.

The events of the war which followed between the Protestants and the Catholics fall not within the scope of this work. The picture of France, during this period, was more deplorable than can be conceived. Carnage and conflagrations marked the successes of both the contending parties. "There was no security," says Browning,* "no asylum against violence: the faith of treaties and the sanctity of oaths were both set at nought. Tortures, contrived with care for delaying death and prolonging the duration of pain, were inflicted on persons who had surrendered upon capitulation. Husbands and fathers were stabbed in the arms of their wives and daughters, who were then violated in sight of the dying men. Women and children were treated with a brutality that defies description. Aged magistrates, the victims of unbridled rage, were exposed after death to every possible indignity: the populace dragged their yet palpitating entrails through the streets, and even ate of their flesh." Anquetil, a Catholic writer, from whom this account is borrowed, asserts that "these excesses originated in the disrespect manifested by the Calvinists for the images, relics, and other

* Hist. of the Hugonots, i. 135.

objects of the Catholic worship, which caused the priests from their pulpits to hurl their thunderbolts against the offenders. The zeal of the priests inflamed the people to madness; and the leaders lamented the atrocious outrages which were committed without being able to put a stop to them."

It is well known, however, that some of the leaders and even Catholic churchmen not only instigated but took an active part in those horrors. Montluc, bishop of Valence, very coolly relates in his *Memoirs* the cruelties which he practised on the heretics. "I procured," he tells us, "two executioners, who were called my lacqueys, because they were so much with me." He frankly acknowledges that his chief object was to injure the sectarians, whom he would have destroyed to a man; and that he felt such hatred and rage against them as hurried him away, and caused him to exercise not only severity but cruelty.

After the treaty was actually concluded, the Pope wrote to the cardinals of Lorraine and Bourbon, expressing his extreme concern for the misfortune which had befallen the country. "It is especially to be feared," he says, "that God will inflict a judgment on the king himself, and on all those who have had a hand in this negociation." He called upon them to do their duty and to defend the Church, employing all sorts of arguments, and sparing neither threats, promises, nor appeals to their pride and honour. All at once, the letters of the pontiff ceased

to breathe the same holy zeal for the extermination of the heretics, to whom no further allusion was made in them; so that he had no doubt received some intimation of the queen's treacherous designs, since his correspondence displays the same anxiety for upholding the interests of the Catholic religion.

In November, 1562, the king of Navarre, commanding the royal army besieging Rouen, fell in the storming of that city; and, early in the following year, the Catholic cause lost its most formidable champion, the duke of Guise. While besieging Orleans, he was assassinated by Poltrot, a Hugonot gentleman, and a gloomy fanatic, who, pretending to change his religion, repaired to the duke's camp, and was received by him with great kindness. An opportunity soon presented itself for the execution of his bloody design. At dusk, in the evening of the 16th of February, the murderer, lurking behind a hedge, fired a pistol at the duke as he passed, and lodged three balls in his left shoulder. At first, Guise made light of the wound, but it was soon evident that it must prove mortal. On his death-bed, he accused himself of being the cause of the bloodshed which had attended the civil war, but repeatedly declared that the massacre at Vassy was purely accidental. His sentiments in regard to heretics were changed; and in his dying advice to the queen he recommended mild and tolerant measures. He expired on the eighth day from that on which he was wounded; and the popish party

took great pains to persuade the world that the generous and chivalrous Coligny had instigated the murderer to the commission of the crime.

The death of the duke of Guise by the hand of an assassin deprived the royal army of its commander, for whom a competent successor was not to be found. It had the effect also of restoring the supreme authority to the queen-mother. The affairs of the Hugonots were so flourishing that no doubt they would soon be able to dictate their own terms: Catherine, therefore, became desirous of an accommodation; and the result was the edict of Amboise, dated March 19, 1563, by which the privileges granted in the edict of January, 1562, were curtailed; but the Protestants were allowed the free exercise of their religion in all the towns in their possession. The prince of Condé, by whom this treaty was negociated, incurred severe censure from his party for having agreed to terms so unfavourable: but it was too late to retract. Prisoners were set at liberty, the towns given up, and the troops disbanded.

The peace was not of long duration. Rumours of plans formed by the court, in secret association with the Pope and Philip II. of Spain, for the total suppression of the Protestant faith in France, excited general alarm; and, in 1567, the entrance on one side of a Spanish army destined for the Netherlands, under the bloody-minded duke of Alva, and on another of Swiss mercenaries hired by the court, seemed to confirm those rumours, and to indicate that the

plan in question was about to be carried into immediate execution.

In the Spanish Netherlands, the prince of Condé, the great leader of the Protestants, was at this time furiously denounced from the Catholic pulpits. Here is a choice specimen of the eloquence of Adriansen, a Cordelier, of Brussels. “Ah! look at that cursed Condé, the leader of the Hugonots of France!..... Oh, false traitor, infamous scoundrel, double villain! He insists on being entitled *Ludovicus XIII., primus Rex Christianus*. Dost thou then fancy thyself the first king of the Christians? Now, must not this Condé and his Hugonots have, every one of them, at least a hundred thousand devils in his belly?..... Alas, alas! why did not Monseigneur de Guise, that holy martyr of blessed memory, cause to be hung up on a gibbet, when he had taken him five years ago, this bandit, this raging bedevilled madman!” The sermon of this meek Franciscan was delivered in 1567.

The liberty granted to the Hugonots by different edicts was continually infringed, so that it was reduced to almost nothing; they were attacked and slaughtered with impunity, and they could not obtain redress either from the parliaments or from the king's council: no resource was, therefore, left them but another appeal to arms. In the struggle which ensued, they again made themselves masters of Orleans, of many towns in the southern provinces, and of La Rochelle, which was long the asylum of Pro-

testantism in France. The wily Catherine de Medicis once more had recourse to negociation; and a treaty, signed at Longjumeau in March, 1568, guaranteed to the insurgents all the privileges granted to them by that of Amboise. La Rochelle and some other towns, nevertheless, refused to submit to the king.

The short cessation of hostilities, for peace it could not be called, which followed only served to convince the Hugonots that no reliance was to be placed on the most solemn engagements of their Catholic rulers. In the large towns, the populace, inflamed by furious preachers, committed the greatest outrages upon the Protestants. Their representations to the government were unheeded. From the pulpits was inculcated the horrible maxim that no faith was to be kept with heretics, and that to slaughter them was just, pious, and useful for salvation. Tumults and murders were the consequence; these passed without inquiry: and the dungeon, poison, and the dagger awaited not the Hugonots only, but all who were connected with them. In the space of three months, upwards of two thousand of them were thus sacrificed.

Treacherous attempts were made to entrap and secure the prince of Condé, Coligny, and other leaders of the Protestants, but, being discovered, they all failed, and the predestined victims escaped to La Rochelle. About the same time, a bull, sent by the Pope, authorised the king to alienate church pro-

perty to the value of 100,000 crowns, on condition that he should make war upon the heretics, and utterly destroy or bring them back to the Church. The chancellor de l'Hopital, the consistent advocate of toleration, opposed the reception of this bull; and entreated the queen to abstain from a measure which would again deluge the kingdom with blood. His opposition delayed its adoption, but led to his dismissal from office.

Catherine betook herself to stratagem, on receiving intelligence of the vigorous preparations making by the Protestants for resistance. She promulgated an edict, promising them justice for the past and protection for the future: but, so completely was it at variance with her late conduct, that it produced no effect on the minds of those to whom it was addressed. She then gave the command of the army to her second son, the duke of Anjou, and issued several fresh edicts against the Hugonots. These revoked all existing ordinances in their favour, forbade upon pain of death the exercise of any religion but the popish, and dismissed all who professed the new faith from their offices. We cannot wonder if the first outburst of the vengeance of the Protestants fell upon the monasteries and the Romish ecclesiastics; for the priests had uniformly been the approvers and instigators of their sufferings, and the authority of the Church had always been invoked to sanction the butchery and the burnings of their relatives and friends.

Pope Pius V. sent to Charles IX. 10,000 pieces of gold towards defraying the expences of the war. This pontiff had, by his severity to heretics, obtained the rank of cardinal and the office of Grand Inquisitor, and, after his elevation to the papal chair, he was incessantly engaged in fomenting persecutions on account of religion. Letters written by him in 1569 seemed to prove that he had then conceived the idea of some sweeping measure, like that of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, for exterminating heresy in France. After informing the cardinal of Bourbon that he was ready to face death in the cause of God, he says, "This gives us a right to exhort you earnestly, by our letters, and to excite you to make every effort, to employ all your influence, for procuring a definitive and serious adoption of a measure for bringing about the destruction of the implacable enemies of God and the king: a measure without which it will always be impossible to prosecute vigorously the operations of the war, and to bring it to a happy issue." To the king he writes: "When God, as we trust, shall have given us the victory, it will then be for you to punish, with the utmost rigour, the heretics and their leaders, because they are the enemies of God; and you must avenge upon them not only your own injuries, but those of Almighty God." It is evident from these passages that the contemplated measure was not connected with military operations.

* In this same year (1569) a price having been set

on Coligni's head, Maurevert, a gentleman who had been page to the Guises, undertook and received payment beforehand to assassinate the Admiral. The latter had, just before, suddenly left Mouy, a young and valiant officer in command at Niort, and proceeded himself to La Rochelle. The hired murderer, too conscientious to receive wages and not do something to earn them, seized a favourable opportunity to shoot Mouy in the back: he died in a few days, and the garrison in consequence surrendered to the duke of Anjou, who was besieging the town. No doubt was ever expressed that this prince was the instigator of the base assassin, who immediately took refuge in his camp. From this execrable deed he received the appellation of the king's assassin—"le tueur du Roy, ou le tueur aux gages du Roy," says Brantôme.

The first battle, fought at Jarnac in March, 1569, deprived the Protestants of their illustrious leader, the prince of Condé, who had the misfortune to be taken prisoner, and was afterwards shot in cold blood by an officer of the duke of Anjou's. Indeed, it was generally believed that orders had been issued to spare no Hugonot of distinction who might be taken. This unfortunate event brought forward his nephew, the Prince of Bearn, son of the late king of Navarre, then only in his sixteenth year, as the nominal commander-in-chief of the Protestant army, the actual direction of which, however, was vested in the Admiral de Coligny.

After the battle of Jarnac, the Pope renewed his sanguinary exhortations. To the king he expatiated on the necessity of destroying all his enemies and “tearing up the roots, nay, the very smallest fibres of the roots, of so terrible and confirmed an evil: for, unless they are radically extirpated, they will be found to shoot out again. You will bring this about, if no consideration for persons or worldly things induces you to spare the enemies of God.” He then quotes the example of Saul, who is said to have been deposed from the sovereignty for sparing the Amalekites, for the purpose of extinguishing any spark of humanity which might lurk in the breast of the king. He employed the same argument with Catherine, and assures her that the assistance of God will not be wanting, if she pursues the enemies of the Catholic religion until they are *all massacred*, for it is only by the *entire extermination* of the heretics that the Catholic worship can be restored.” In complimenting the duke of Anjou on his victory, he enjoins him to reject every intercession in favour of the heretics. “It is your duty,” he says, “to show yourself justly inexorable to all.” He repeats the same advice in nearly the same words to Charles, and cautions him against “listening to any entreaties, or yielding to friendship or blood.”

The cardinal of Lorraine was exhorted at the same time to spare no efforts to make the Catholic religion *alone* be observed by all, not only publicly,

but also in the interior of the conscience. The Pope then desires him “to convince the king of the notorious truth, that he could never satisfy the Redeemer nor obey his laws, unless he showed himself inexorable to all who should dare to intercede for those abominable men.”

Hostilities were continued till midsummer, 1570, with various success, but generally to the disadvantage of the Protestants in regular engagements. They were approaching Paris, when the king, who had himself taken the field, the queen, the duke of Anjou, and the cardinal of Lorraine held a consultation, at which they unanimously resolved to offer terms of peace, as the only expedient for ridding the kingdom of foreign troops, and to await a favourable opportunity for effecting their grand object—the overthrow of the Protestant religion.

Though the Hugonot leaders were equally tired of the war, and the Admiral in particular was anxious to put an end to the calamities which it inflicted on his country, he would listen to nothing short of a guarantee of absolute liberty of conscience to the professors of the reformed religion. In spite of the strenuous efforts of the Pope and the king of Spain to prevent an accommodation, peace was signed in August, at St. Germain.

The bases of this treaty were a general amnesty; the free exercise of the reformed religion in the suburbs of two towns in each province; the restora-

tion of confiscated property; and admissibility to most offices in the state; and, as security for its full observance, the Protestants were allowed to hold the towns of La Rochelle, Montauban, Cognac, and La Charité, but engaged by oath to surrender them in two years.

The joy which this pacification excited in France was equalled only by the chagrin of the Pope, who had made strenuous efforts to prevent an accommodation. After the defeat of the Protestants at Montcontour, Pius had urged the king to follow up his success and to stifle every feeling of clemency, as sinful and rebellious against the Almighty. After holding out once more the fate of Saul, he adds: "In short, what else would it be but frustrating the goodness of God in this victory over the heretics? The fruits which it ought to produce are the *extermination* of those infamous heretics, our common enemies, on account of the deserved hatred which they inspire, and the restoration of the ancient peace and tranquillity of the kingdom. Suffer not yourself to be deluded with vain sentiments of pity, and seek not the false glory of a pretended clemency in pardoning injuries done to God himself: for nothing is more cruel than mercy towards wretches who have merited the worst punishments. If your majesty wishes to restore the ancient splendour, power, and dignity of France, you must strive most especially to make all who are subject to your dominion profess the Catholic faith *alone*—that faith which, from

the first origin of Christianity, has remained uncontaminated to this day." The pious writer concludes with recommending the execution of all who had borne arms against the government, and the establishment of inquisitors in every town throughout the kingdom.

With this sanguinary advice his own conduct perfectly tallied. Such was his fondness for the office of Grand Inquisitor, that he continued to perform its functions even after his elevation to the papal chair; and no pontiff ever caused so many heretics or persons suspected of heresy to be burned in Rome, as he did. Among the victims of his zeal were several scholars, especially Aonius Palearius, who had compared the Inquisition to a dagger held to the throat of literary men. In 1570, Pius, after extorting from this unfortunate scholar a declaration, by which he acknowledged the right of the sovereign pontiff to order heretics to be executed, and even to kill them with his own hand, consigned him to the flames. This declaration, in Latin, written by the hand of Palearius himself, is preserved in the archives of France.

Paul III., who reigned from 1534 to 1549, was the author of the bull *In Cœnâ Domini*. By this bull, all who appeal from the Popes to a general council, who favour the appellants, who assert that the general council is superior to the sovereign pontiff; those who, without the consent of Rome, demand of the clergy contributions for the necessities

of the State; the lay tribunals which dare to try bishops, priests, or monks; the chancellors, vice-chancellors, presidents, counsellors, procureurs-generaux, who pronounce upon ecclesiastical causes; in short, all who contravene the omnipotence of the Holy See, and the absolute independence of the clergy, are anathematised. Promulgated for the first time on Maundy Thursday, in the year 1536, this bull was ordered to be published every year on the same day. Hence it is called *In Cæná Domini*, for the practice of publishing it every year at Rome was established, in spite of the just remonstrances of sovereigns, and even of certain cardinals and prelates.

Pius V., who revived and amplified this arrogant and offensive act, ordered it to be published every Maundy Thursday in all the churches: till then it had been fulminated in Rome alone. It seemed, indeed, as if Pius was determined to excite all the Catholic princes left against the Holy See, and to force them either to renounce the independence of their crowns or the faith of their forefathers. There was no end to remonstrances. Philip II., the most bigoted monarch of the age, forbade the publication of that bull in his dominions. By another bull, Pius excommunicated queen Elizabeth—a superfluous anathema, at least, and which produced no other effect than the execution of John Felton, who had dared to post it up in London.

This Pope, in quality, as he alleged, of pastor

charged to examine who had deserved extraordinary honours by great zeal for the Holy See, conferred the title of grand-duke of Tuscany on Cosmo de Medicis. The emperor complained to no purpose: Cosmo, with his new title, went to Rome to be crowned, and took an oath to the Pope. The motives alleged by cardinal Commendon to Maximilian, in justification of this pontifical act, are well worthy of remark. The Pope, he said, had deposed Childeric, installed Pepin, transferred the empire from the East to the West, instituted the electors, confirmed and crowned the emperors; whence he concluded that the Pope was the distributor of thrones and titles, and in some measure the name-giver of princes, as Adam was of the animals. Weak princes indeed encouraged the ambition of Pius by flinging themselves at his feet. Catherine de Medicis boasted to him of the devoted attachment of her son, Charles IX., to holy Church, and applied to him for money, a great deal of money, because without money it was not in her power to make war upon heresy. Alphonso d'Est called himself his servant and vassal, and begged his forgiveness for a request which he had presumed to address to the emperor.

At the same time that this Pope was arming Christians against Christians, to avenge certain articles of the Catholic faith, he was writing to the Persians and the Arabs, that, notwithstanding the difference of their creeds, a common interest ought to rally Asia to Europe to fight the Ottomans!

Before I proceed to relate the circumstances of the sanguinary tragedy that was preparing, it may be proper to collect a few scattered traits illustrative of the state of France, and to portray some of the leading actors, in order to convey some idea of the profound depravity through which it became possible to consummate so prodigious a catastrophe.

At the head of the government we find an incarnate fury, a monster of depravity, perfidy, and cruelty, the regent, Catherine de Medicis. Sprung from a family of Popes, Catherine was the only daughter of the Second Lorenzo de Medicis, duke of Urbino. On the expulsion from Florence of his successor by the republican party, she was left behind in that city; and it is related to have been a subject of serious deliberation with the leaders of that party, whether Catherine should be consigned to a convent or a brothel, either of which might have been as suitable to her genius and character as the other. Providence, however, in its inscrutable wisdom, reserved her for a different destiny. When, through the influence of her uncle, Pope Clement VII., and the armed interference of Charles V., her family was reinstated in the sovereign power at Florence, her hand was obtained, in 1533, for Henry, son of Francis I., of France.

Catherine came to her new country, nurtured in the school of Alexander VI., the Borgias, and all those petty tyrants of Italy, whose lessons she imbibed from the works of Machiavel, who dedicated

to her kinsman Lorenzo his most famous but most mischievous composition, because perhaps its real drift was not understood. His maxims, however, literally construed, were adopted as principles of state. "The Prince" became the fashionable book at the court of France; Catherine studied it; and there she found the models which she held forth to the imitation of her sons. It was the favourite reading of Charles IX. Henry III. shut himself up every day in his cabinet with Gondi de Retz, d'Elbenne, and Corbinelli, Florentines, to read and to comment upon their countryman Machiavel: and there he learned, like his brother, to become a bigot, a hypocrite, perfidious, and sanguinary.

Catherine offered to them both precept and example; her ultramontane policy never walked but in crooked ways. For the rule of her conduct, says Mezerai, she had taken this maxim of her house, that "in order to reign you must divide:" in consequence, she favoured the Protestants, whenever she wished to humble the Guises. She permitted them, underhand, to hold meetings, and openly affected to complain of them for doing so. Madame Duplessis Mornay relates in her Memoirs that her first husband, M. Feuquieres, who, after so arduous a struggle with his convictions as to produce illness, had abandoned Catholicism, without leaving the court, "in concert with other zealous persons, frequently caused preaching to be held in the chamber of the queen-mother during her dinner, being assisted to do so by some

of her femmes de chambre, who were of the religion."

It was Catherine who first issued edicts in favour of the Protestants, while, at the same time, she was meditating their ruin. When she saw the Lorraine princes gaining the ascendancy, she wrote to Condé, begging him to take up "the defence of the State, and to save the mother and her infant;" and this letter produced the first civil war. When news of the battle of Dreux, reported at first to have been lost by the Catholics, reached the court, "Well," said she drily, "then we shall have to say our prayers in French," and she fell to caressing the Protestants: but, on the following day, when authentic intelligence proclaimed the victory of the Catholics, she ordered bonfires to be made, and sent to the duke of Guise, whom she hated, the appointment of commander of the armies. Jealous of both parties, she sought among the Protestants a counterpoise to the ascendancy of the Guises, and in the Guises a bulwark against the Protestants; fully resolved to abandon her faith, but not the sceptre, to the chance of battles: Catholic or Calvinist, no matter; all she wanted was but to quell and to reign over both parties.

For the rest, she was of that cold-blooded nature which left her mind in perfect freedom to combine at leisure the plans of her atrocities. She liked therefore to give them the disguise of festivities; and she was never so entirely engrossed as when she appeared to be engaged in frivolous pursuits, court diversions,

and dissipations. Thus, at Bayonne, she passed the days in devising ballets and the nights in conferring with Alba. The magnificence, the taste, the gallantry, which reigned in these fêtes surpassed all that had ever been seen; “and note,” says Brantôme, “that all these inventions came from no other shop, no other mind, but the queen’s;” and it was then that she planned the proscription of 200,000 Frenchmen.

To this queen all ways were good for gratifying her vengeance and attaining her ends. History is full of scandalous details of the snares which she laid for the leaders of the Protestants, by means of the females whom she kept in her train. “Wherever she went,” says Mezerai, “she took with her the apparatus for the most voluptuous diversions, and two or three hundred [Brantôme tells us that there were at least three hundred *dames ou demoiselles* in her retinue] of the handsomest females of her court, who led in leash twice as many courtiers. Let war or public affairs create what embarrassments they would, balls must be kept up: the tones of violins were never drowned by the clang of trumpets; the same carriage bore the machinery of ballets and the machines of war; and in the same lists were to be seen Frenchmen butchering each other, and carrousels at which ladies were taking their pleasure.”

The same writer mentions “an entertainment given by Catherine, at which females, habited as men and dressed in green, waited at table;” and another, which she gave to Monsieur at Chenonceaux, and on

which, to shew that it was of her he had learned prodigality, she expended more than 100,000 livres; and “the most beautiful women of the court were employed to wait at table, with bosoms bare, and hair floating loose like that of brides.”

These females Catherine took into her service at the age of fourteen; personal charms were a title to preference, and she trained them according to her views: hence almost all of them became celebrated for their gallantries; and though the queen appeared at times to affect severity when they carried matters too far, this was only a trick of her policy, and privately she always manifested extreme indulgence for their indiscretions, as she had done towards her husband's mistresses, when they were serviceable to her designs.* This harem, kept under the name of ladies of honour, proved fatal to more than one warrior. They gained the chiefs by their blandishments, wormed from them their secrets, and instantly revealed them to their mistress: in this way, the young Beraudière drew Antoine de Bourbon from the Protestant interest, and it was in the arms of this lady of honour that he became a good Catholic. Bayle relates with what art the beautiful Limeuil, by command of the queen, to whom she was related, contrived to entangle the prince of Condé; how Catherine favoured their

* Miss Leviston, a Scotchwoman, who made no secret of her intrigues, and who became mother by Henry II. of the duke d'Angoulême, was lady of honour to Catherine. This queen was also the confidante and friend of her rival, Diane de Poitiers.

amours, and their scandalous result. The proud Chateauneuf was at the same time the declared mistress of the duke of Anjou and his mother's lady of honour. In spite of her adventures, she afterwards married Antinotti, an Italian, whom she murdered with her own hand. It was with Catherine's consent that half a dozen of these *ladies* disputed, not unsuccessfully, for the heart of her younger son, the duke of Anjou, the king of Navarre, and the first men of the court. It is even alleged that she received into her retinue Marie Touchet, the public mistress of Charles IX., in order that she might be better able to chain that furious lion. But the person who served most to promote her designs was the beautiful Sauves, so celebrated in the annals of those times. She was *dame d'atours* to Catherine. Her wit, her beauty, her graces, her experience in the arts of seduction, rendered her particularly dangerous to young hearts. She was justly called the Circe of the court. This enchantress bound Henry IV. and many others by her spells.

Catherine reigned over this troop of licentious females; it was she who presided over the employment of their charms; she directed their shafts, and marked their victims. In this school were trained Diane and Gabrielle d'Estrées, as well as Catherine's own daughter Margaret, who was but too apt a scholar. All these rival beauties sowed dissensions and jealousies among the chiefs. Few were proof against their seductions; they omitted nothing to

make proselytes and to effect conversions. Hence Jeanne d'Albret, on her arrival at Blois, was so shocked by the corruption which pervaded the court of the Valois, that, in writing to her son, she observed, "Though I believed it to be very great, I find it still greater: here it is not the men who solicit the women, but the women who solicit the men." Brantôme, who personally knew most of these females, adds that "the time when they were single was their best time; for they had their free choice to be priestesses either of Venus or Diana: they had prudence, skill, and knowledge *pour se garder de l'enflure*." Need we further proofs that the vices introduced by Catherine and her Italians into the court of the Valois rendered it perhaps the most corrupt that ever existed?

Upon this corruption, which was her work, Catherine grounded her successes. Virtue was hateful to her. She persecuted it in l'Hopital and in Coligni;* she feared it in her own children. She gave lessons in intrigue to her own daughter, and offered, if she would make certain confessions, to annul her marriage with the king of Navarre. Dreading lest the beauty joined with the virtue of the consort of

* When in 1569 Maurevert had most basely assassinated Mouy, his benefactor and a friend of Coligni's, the queen settled upon him an annuity upon the Hotel de Ville. It was the same man who, after this encouragement, and after secret interviews with Anjou, the Guises, and Gondi, Catherine's favourite, wounded the admiral with an arquebuse, a few days before the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

Henry III. should give her too much empire over her husband and too much influence with the Guises, she employed the confessor of that queen to prejudice her mind against Henry, and some of her husband's minions to prepossess him against the queen.

It was by such detestable arts that Catherine filled her court with dissensions, tears, and terrors; that she there naturalized Italian cunning and duplicity; and these she employed more especially against the princes of the blood, whom she considered as her enemies. As long as she lived, she persecuted the Bourbons. Antoine of Bourbon was ever an object of her injustice or her contempt; she strove to bring the brave Condé to the block; and when that unfortunate prince was murdered, she concentrated all her hatred upon Henry IV. She had persecuted him from his cradle; and, dogging him with the perseverance of a fury, she never left him till she sunk herself into the tomb.* She had prevented Henry III. from marrying Catherine, sister of the king of Navarre, dreading to see her on the throne of France; but she gave him her daughter, and we shall see how she celebrated their nuptials. After the massacre, she kept him in abasement, caused him to be examined like a criminal, subjected him to a thousand annoyances, and for four years held him in close captivity, either at Vincennes or at

* It is said that one grand cause of the hatred of Catherine to Henry IV. was, that her Italian astrologers had foretold that he should succeed her sons on the throne of France.

her court, merely allowing him, by a perfidy worthy of herself alone, free access to the apartments of her maids of honour. She hoped in this manner to extinguish his generous courage, as she had done that of her sons: again he escaped her toils. But it was more especially after the death of the duke of Alençon that, seeing her only surviving son Henry III. without issue, and incapable of having any, she employed all her batteries to keep her son-in-law, Henry IV., aloof from the throne to which he was called by his birth. She encouraged the pretensions of all the foreigners to the crown: she strove to transfer it to the children of her daughter, the duchess of Lorraine; she made every possible effort to sap the foundations of the Salic law, to prevent the Bourbons from reigning.

If Catherine hated Henry IV. thus mortally, it was because she could not corrupt him, because his noble qualities threw her into the shade. To the last, she prevented her unfortunate son from joining that hero, who alone could deliver him from the oppression of foreigners. At length, this queen, known and despised too late, abhorred by her own son, died of chagrin, because she was reduced to a cipher. Henry afterwards acknowledged that she was the only woman he had ever hated. Many years subsequently, when Mary de Medicis was proposed to him for a consort, he acknowledged to Sully his repugnance to the match, because she was of the same family as Catherine, who, he said, had

done so much mischief to France, and to him in particular. "I dread that alliance, lest it should also turn out ill for myself, for mine, and for the state." His fears were but too fully justified by the event.

Born of an Italian mother, suckled by an Italian nurse, surrounded from their cradle by Italians, the last scions of the house of Valois resembled their mother much more than their father in disposition: they were more Italians than French.

Charles IX. was but ten years old when he came to the crown. At this tender age, the juvenile sovereign was wholly left to the lessons of his mother. Gifted by nature with a good understanding and a kindly disposition, he had even virtues that might have rendered him a good king. But, incessantly beset by Catherine, surrounded by tools placed about him by her to corrupt him, filled with her pernicious maxims, his young mind readily received the impressions which great pains were taken to produce. His mother familiarised him early with blood; she accustomed him to spill that of animals; she infused into him the inclinations of a butcher, in order that he might in time contract those of an executioner. One of his pleasures was to strike off at one blow the heads of the animals that fell in his way; in this manner, he prepared himself to wreak his cruelty upon his subjects. There was not an execution of note at the Grève to which this unworthy mother did not take her sons: and, while she thus

instilled cruelty into their dispositions, she took pains to corrupt their morals, to render them effeminate, and to encourage a fondness for sensual pleasures; in short, her perfidious indulgence gave them up, without defence, to every species of seduction. All that afterwards happened was but the necessary consequence of this perverse education. Of the art of reigning, she taught Charles nothing but dissimulation. During the fourteen years that he was upon the throne, she held him under her tutelage; she prolonged his childhood; she kept him in subjection to her will; it was she who reigned in his name; so that to her, rather than to the unfortunate prince, ought the horrors of this horrible reign to be attributed.

That honest historian, de Thou, ascribes the corruption of Charles, his habit of profane swearing, his tastes, his mistresses, the outrages against nature committed in his own court, to the pernicious lessons of his mother, and the governors whom she placed about him. "He was so fettered by his mother," observes the Chancellor l'Hopital, "that he durst not even say what he thought."

She would not initiate him at first into her fatal secret. She knew him to be violent, impetuous, and incapable of combining and relishing a tardy vengeance; at the same time, she took care to inspire him with a bitter hatred against the Protestants. In his gusts of passion, he talked of nothing but making war upon them; she diverted him from that idea;

she curbed him, and at length revealed to him the secret ways which she designed to employ for the destruction of the rebels. But she had already taken her measures for their execution.

Charles was so passionately fond of the chace, that he would give up eating, drinking, and very often sleep, for that amusement. He was equally fond of the mechanical art of the locksmith. "As to making the lock of an arquebuse or pistol, a door-key or lock, nay, even a horse-shoe, he equalled, if not surpassed, the best workmen in that craft. In the palace of the Louvre, he had caused a forge to be constructed under his apartments, and there he worked every day, putting on a black holland frock over his clothes, and very often stripping to his shirt, so hard did he labour.* While the king was engaged in these favourite pursuits, Catherine held frequent committees with her confidants. When at Blois, in 1571, she held one of these councils, to which were summoned the duke of Anjou, the cardinal of Lorraine, his brother the duke of Aumale, the duke of Guise, Birague, the three brothers Gondi, and Gonzaga, duke of Nevers: and it has been remarked that, in the same room, seventeen years afterwards, the same

* On Saturday, August 23, 1572, after supper, about eleven o'clock, the king, having taken the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, &c. went down to his forge, and fell to work in his usual manner, making the princes and lords of his train hammer, and do other jobs for him. Meanwhile, between one and two o'clock on the morning of Sunday, St. Bartholomew's day . . . the alarm-bell rang . . . (Favyn, *Hist. de Navarre*, fol. 866, 867.)

duke of Guise was assassinated by the same duke of Anjou, who had become king. In this council it was that the massacre of St. Bartholomew was determined upon. De Thou says, "Many believed that the king was never consulted upon it; and that he was absolutely ignorant of the plan formed by his mother, his brother, and their accomplices."

Six months afterwards, whether the king was still but the passive instrument of his mother's vengeance, or whether the monster was by this time perfected, he dared boast to Coligni of his frankness and his sincerity. "As for me," said he, "I am a Frenchman; but my brother, the duke of Anjou, scarcely ever talks but with his head, his eyes, and his shoulders; he is an Italian."

When dying, Charles learned to know his mother, then, alas! too late. It was not in her power to deliver him from remorse, the last virtue of the guilty. From the day of the massacre his mind was deranged. He was incessantly haunted by bloody spectres and phantoms. For two years he was tormented by the furies, and died in despair.

What has been said concerning Charles applies still more strongly to his brother Anjou. The treatment and education of both were alike. The latter was born with promising qualities: with as good an understanding, he was milder and better tempered than his brother. He was but eight years old when left to the sole guidance of his mother, so that she had abundant time to mould the soft and ductile

wax ; and, as he had a more docile disposition for her lessons, she always had a marked predilection for him ; he was her favourite child. He even excited more than once the jealousy of Charles, and was probably initiated earlier than the king into the secret of the massacre, and some days before he had private conferences with the assassin of Coligni.

The queen rendered him odious ; before she had done, she rendered him contemptible. She extinguished the fair hopes that his youth had held out ; she enervated his courage, made his manners effeminate, applauded the scandal of his minions. She filled him with prejudices and superstition. If he left the arms of voluptuous indulgence, it was to give himself up to all the minutiae of monkish devotion, and yet he relinquished to her the reins of government. This was precisely what she wished, what she asked for ; and while Henry, with his fantastic tastes, his meannesses, his oddities, his pious masquerades, his unworthy disguises, sometimes in female attire, sometimes in a monk's frock, presented to the French a picture of royal degradation, Catherine put the crown upon her own head. It was not till her death that, excited by Henry IV., he seemed disposed for a moment to rouse himself from his stupor ; but he perished a few months afterwards, the victim of his false policy, by a crime of which he had set an example, derived from the detestable lessons of his mother.

Albert de Gondi, duke de Retz, the favourite and

confidant of the queen-mother, the adviser and one of the principal actors in the tragedy of the 24th of August, proved one of the most mischievous of her instruments to France, from the ascendancy which he gained over the mind of Charles IX. and the influence which he had on all the events of that deplorable time. He was the son of a gentleman of Florence, and banker at Lyons. His wife, also an Italian, "had found means to get into the service of Catherine as wet-nurse to her children, and had even, as it is said, assisted that princess to have issue after being married ten years without any; for which reason, on becoming queen and regent of the kingdom, she advanced all the Gondis so much in estates and dignities."*

Suckled at the same breast as the royal children, Gondi beset his unhappy foster-brother Charles IX. from the moment of his birth till he expired. He acquired immense possessions; had a brother, who was made bishop of Paris in 1570; and there were twenty others of his family who held the highest offices. He was called the queen's minion—for she too had her minions—and was an object of public indignation for his vices and cruelties.

It was this Florentine, marshal of France, though he had never seen an army, and the most depraved of mankind, who was selected by Catherine for governor to Charles IX. and his brothers. He was the first foreigner appointed in France to an office, on

* Journal de Henri III., i. 304.

which, under despotic governments, the welfare of States essentially depends. It was not till this fatal epoch that all the laws of the nation were daringly violated. It was he who taught the prince to vent his rage in the most horrible oaths, execrations, and blasphemies ; it was he who opened his soul to every baneful passion, who encouraged his fondness for cruel sights and violent exercises : “ in short,” says Brantôme, “ it was he who perverted him in every possible way, and made him forget and forsake the wholesome instructions imparted by the excellent de Cipierre,” his first governor. It was in his house that the massacre, for which his detestable lessons had prepared his pupil, was decided upon ; it was he who harassed and tormented the young king till he had wrung from him the fatal order : he disputed with Catherine the fatal honour of consigning him to remorse, and that arquebuse—who knows what hand put it into his ! Narcissus of old was not more successful in transforming Nero into a monster than Gondi, the Florentine, in depraving Charles IX.

Birague, a native of Milan, who came young to France, successively soldier, lawyer, courtier, married, priest, chancellor, cardinal, possessed all the qualities requisite to advance himself in such a court as Catherine’s — great audacity, and still greater suppleness, ambition and no scruples, talent for business and particularly for intrigue, some understanding and plenty of ignorance. “ Italian by nation and religion,” says l’Etoile, “ for the rest, liberal,

voluptuous, time-serving, a mere tool of the king's will;" to which Mezerai adds, "a magistrate without learning and without study, who bent like a reed to all the winds of the court, paying more deference to a valet in favour than to all the laws of the kingdom—such was the successor of l'Hopital, the most learned of Frenchmen, the most ardent lover of his country."

De Thou is of opinion that Birague was the first, and for some time the only one besides Gondi that was entrusted with the secret of the massacre. It was this triumvirate of Italians who conducted the whole plot, and drew up the proscription list of one hundred thousand Frenchmen. He held the seals from 1570, but it was not till the death of l'Hopital, in 1573, that he had the title of Chancellor, as a reward for the services which he had rendered in the preceding year.

Gonzaga, duke of Nevers, of the house of the princes of Mantua, was a member of all the secret councils which preceded and prepared the massacre, in the execution of which, sorely against his will, he was prevented from taking an active part. He had great influence on public affairs, which were then all discussed in the queen's committees.

The duke of Guise was one of the principal members of the council, at which the massacre was determined upon; and he was also one of the most active instruments in its execution. It was he who gave directions to the Prevot des Marchands for arming

his partisans, and for the marks by which they were to be distinguished. As Grand Master of France, he commanded at the Louvre: he assembled there the officers of the five Catholic cantons and several colonels of the French army, to whom he imparted the secret orders of the king; and spoke to them of the massacre as of a glorious action. He distributed the troops in the different quarters of the city, and particularly in the environs of the Louvre; and posted them in such a manner that none of the retinue of Navarre and Condé should escape. He surrounded in like manner the house of the Admiral; and, having made all his arrangements, he returned to the king, to await the hour that was to be the last of so many victims. There, closeted with Catherine, Birague, Nevers, and Gondi, these five foreigners, by dint of importunities, wrung a consent from the unfortunate prince.

The cardinal of Lorraine, brother of the first and uncle of the second duke of Guise, laboured with more perseverance and success than any other member of the family for its aggrandizement. He set out with insinuating himself by mean complaisance into the good graces of Diane de Poitiers, mistress of Henry II., who ruled that monarch and through him the whole kingdom. Under Francis II., as we have seen, he reigned despotically, and his government was terrible.

He was the first who made the Bastille an instrument of ministerial vengeance. To be suspected by

him was sufficient to cause the noblest personages to be plunged into this tomb of the living, there to perish in tortures or in the anguish of despair. He invented *lettres de cachet*, and multiplied those commissions where the judges were publicly paid for convicting all who dared to censure his tyranny. All means were right that could further his designs. The acceptance of the decrees of the council of Trent seemed calculated to consolidate his power and the influence of his family; and he teased the French, and the magistrates in particular, to assent to their adoption. He considered the Inquisition as a still surer instrument of his secret vengeance, and he made the utmost efforts to introduce it into France.

The cardinal was at one and the same time archbishop of Lyons, of Rheims, of Sens, and of Narbonne; bishop of Metz, of Toul, of Verdun, of Terouenne, of Luçon, of Alby, and of Valence; abbot of Fécamp, of Gorze, of Clugny, of Marmoutier, &c., dispenser of all the benefices in the kingdom, which gave him such influence over the clergy of France, that the very Italians called him "the Pope beyond the Mountains." To all these means of corruption, he added the administration of the finances; and this man, groaning under the weight of dignities and mitres, and of the treasures of the kingdom, had the audacity to order a gibbet to be set up in the courts of Fontainebleau, to hang the first French officer who should dare to solicit the payment for

his services, the moderate price of his blood spilt for the country, or the first creditor of the state that ventured to claim his legitimate debt. It must, at this day, excite unbounded astonishment that the whole nation did not unite to shake off the yoke of this insolent priest, and to deliver its king from the disgraceful chains imposed upon him by these foreigners.

Such was the object of what is called the conspiracy of Amboise: it only served to whet the appetite of the cardinal for persecution. He kindled its fires, and sacrificed thousands of victims to his ambition; he appointed commissions for trying princes of the blood; he purposed sending the king of Navarre to the scaffold, and his widow and children to the dungeons of the Inquisition; he instigated the massacre of the Protestants at Sens, more odious even than that which his brother was at the same time perpetrating at Vassy. He devised plans for their entire proscription; his persecuting spirit extended to England and Scotland; he founded at Rheims an English seminary, whence issued colonies and priests, to preach fanaticism and rebellion in the kingdoms of Britain; and, to enforce the universal adoption of his intolerance, he caused both the Protestants and those who were advocates for indulgence towards them to be punished with the same severity.

The author of great part of the calamities of France was Philip II: his gold was almost as bane-

ful as the rapacity of the Italians and the ambition of the Guises. He made common cause with them, nay, he was more constantly than they the enemy of France.

It was interest alone, under the mask of religion, that actuated this royal hypocrite. By virtue of a papal bull excommunicating Jean d'Albret, for having taken part with Louis XII., and giving his kingdom to Ferdinand, Philip's grandfather, of perfidious memory, Navarre had been usurped by the Spanish monarch. Charles V., when dying, ordered it to be restored. Philip, to evade this injunction and set his conscience at ease, thought it better to cite Jeanne d'Albret to Rome as a heretic; and it was on this occasion that he obtained from the Pope that odious bull, consigning the queen and her children in the cradle to the Inquisition, that he might with a safe conscience appropriate their possessions to himself. This scheme having but partially succeeded, he still feared that the house of Bourbon would establish the validity of the rights which it derived from the d'Albrets. Philip accordingly swore the destruction of the Bourbons; and, for this reason, he was the steady persecutor of Henry IV. He had cheated his father, proscribed his mother, calumniated his uncle Condé, persecuted himself from his cradle; and wished to deprive him of the crown of France, that he might not be obliged to restore to him that of Navarre.

He availed himself of his quality of brother-in-

law of the French kings, and of their minority, to intermeddle in the affairs of France, and to foment troubles in that country: he swayed the regent, urged her to war with the Hugonots, sent her troops and money. The succours and the dread of Spain, of Philip, of Alba, of Granvella, and, above all, of the Inquisition, produced the first civil war. When peace and liberty of conscience were mentioned, Philip threatened. He obtained a promise from Catherine that she would not do any thing till he had assented to it. He had pensioners in the council; he was informed of all that passed in it, frequently even before the princes, which led Mezerai to affirm that "half the council was Spanish." It is almost impossible that Philip should have been unacquainted with the plan of the massacre. Besides, it is well known what an intimate connexion was always kept up by Catherine and the cardinal of Lorraine with Philip and his worthy minister, the duke of Alba, that ferocious monster, who boasted that, in order to establish the Inquisition, he had confiscated to the amount of eight millions of gold per annum, and exterminated eighteen thousand men by the hand of the executioner.

It is likewise known that, in the conferences at Bayonne, the Spaniard and the Italian queen communicated together every night by means of an open gallery. It is even asserted to have been at these secret interviews that they settled the first measures for exterminating the Protestant party, and that

Alba dropped these indiscreet words that "the head of a salmon was worth more than all the frogs of a marsh."

During the reigns of the Valois, and especially under Henry III., the rage for games of chance, likewise imported from Italy, became universal, being communicated by court to city, and by the city to the provinces. They proved the ruin of numberless families, and led to quarrels not to be extinguished but by rivers of blood. It was then, too, that the stiletto and the poniard first came into use. The French, after the example of the Spaniards and the Italians, adopted the savage practice of carrying a dagger at the belt or passed through the hilt of the sword. In vain l'Hopital inveighed against this murderous innovation; in vain he reminded his countrymen that their ancestors, not less brave than they, carried arms only in war and against the enemies of the State.

It is obvious what baneful effects this barbarous custom must produce in those days of animosity and revenge. Duels, which in the age of chivalry retained at least the appearance of valour and honour, degenerated into downright murders: and from the licence of the civil wars dated the practice of wearing the sword in time of profound peace, in all companies, even in the bosom of family and friends.

Another not less fertile source of abuses and corruption in the political system was still more particularly the work of Catherine. She boasted that

there was not a gentleman in the kingdom with an income of ten thousand livres, about whom she had not a spy. This Charles IX. himself one day told Chavigny, one who, amidst a court where depravity of heart and character appeared general, retained the candour and frankness of an upright man. "Sire," he replied, "I know not if spies make tyrants, or tyrants spies, but I think them of no use, except in war."

We read with astonishment that Catherine's three sons, dressed as women, ran at the ring, with rouge, patches, and all the adornments requisite for a coquette. At the tournament held in the Place du Louvre, on the Thursday before St. Bartholomew's day, that is, three days before the massacre, the king, his brothers, Guise, and Aumale were habited as Amazons. There are still extant engraved portraits of Henry III. in that dress, so unworthy of a king, and even of a man. He relinquished entirely the use of hats for the Italian cap, which gave him a more effeminate look; and passed whole days in devising fashions, in dressing the hair of his wife or his mistress, or in the adornment of his own person. "Worshipping his own beauty, like a woman, he slept in gloves to preserve the whiteness of his delicate hands, and had upon his face a prepared paste, with a mask over that."*

But nothing served to incense the French, and

* Journal de Henri III., ii. 282.

especially all virtuous minds against him, so much as his fondness for minions ; the bare suspicion of which had scarcely defiled France before this era of inexpressible depravity. Nothing created him more enemies, and added more partisans to the League than this odious propensity. What inflamed indignation to the highest degree was the alliance of such shameless depravity with the external show of devotion, or rather with superstitious practices and Italian mummeries. The same person who overnight had disguised himself as a woman appeared the next day in the habit of a penitent, girt with a cord, covered with a hair-shirt, a cowl, and a kerchief sprinkled with death's-heads ; and in this plight made himself a gazing-stock to the capital. He would then hasten to bury himself among the Feuillans, the Capuchins, the Hieronimites, in the solitude of Neigeon, or in the wood of Vincennes. Monks became courtiers, courtiers monks ; and, under these deceptive masks, all abandoned themselves without scruple to licentiousness and debauchery.

It was to please the superstitious that he thus degraded himself, and adopted all these pious masquerades, for which he found a pattern and imbibed a fondness at Avignon and in the manners of Italy. In thus assuming an hypocritical mask, according to the lessons of his mother, Henry imagined that he was acting the clever politician : he wished to appear more devout than the Guises, who were regarded as the pillars of religion ; but, the more he strove to

regain the esteem of his subjects, the deeper he sunk into the mire of opprobrium and contempt.

An odd medley of devotion and of that licentiousness which the French call *galantry* was the spirit of the age. Catherine was above both these weaknesses of her sex, but gave way alike to both, according to her views and interests; and she, who was not *galant* or devout any further than her policy prompted, understood the art of turning this disposition in others to good account. We have seen how she allowed the numerous beauties of her court to get lovers, provided they made proselytes, at what price they purchased this double triumph, and that very often each conversion cost them a weakness. The queen herself, in the midst of a ball, or just risen from the arms of the *Vidame de Chartres* or of *Troilus de Mesgouez*, would draw up a profession of faith, which the ladies of her retinue were to get signed; and these at night made their lovers sign it, as a preliminary without which they could never hope for their favours.

Her daughter Margaret mingled with the performance of the minutest practices of devotion the pursuits of the most decided *galantry*; passed from the foot of the altar to the *boudoirs* of voluptuousness, heard regularly three masses a day, and listened willingly to three lovers; and, divided between the objects of her tenderness, made, under the direction of her confessor, almost as frequent retreats as under that of the “handsome *Chanvallon*.”

The faith of Catherine in astrology and her decided taste for what was then called magic are attested by all historians. This was another of the productions of the climate of Italy, which she transplanted into France, where her example, a fondness for novelty, a restless ignorance, and an ambitious curiosity, caused them speedily to bear fruit. Never was woman more superstitious. At the birth of a child she never failed to consult some astrologer about its destiny. That famous dreamer, Nostradamus, was held by her in the highest estimation; but Master Bernard Abatio added to the title of physician that of “astrologer to the most Christian king of France, Charles IX.,” and prefixed it to his “Prognostication” relative to the fatal marriage, dated from his “encyclopedic study,” and printed in 1572. In this production he examines whether the king of Navarre and his wife will love one another, whether they will live long, whether they will have children, and so forth. He does not fail to deduce the most auspicious forebodings, and eight days afterwards—we shall see what happened. But, while Catherine was commanding a public prediction respecting the marriage of her daughter with the king of Navarre, she was secretly consulting Ruggieri, to know whether she ought to put to death this same king of Navarre, her son-in-law, and his cousin the prince of Condé, amidst the festivities for the nuptials: this Ruggieri subsequently confessed in his judicial examinations.

This man was another of the Florentines who came to France in Catherine's train. A priest, astrologer, magician, and, above all, a great impostor, he drew the horoscope of all the young gentlemen of the court, and made charms to procure them handsome mistresses. He was in high favour with the ladies. Few men had more friends and more influence at that superstitious court; and Catherine frequently consulted him, and employed him for more than one purpose. She placed him about her youngest son, the duke of Alençon, upon pretext of his teaching him Italian, but in reality to serve her for a spy, and he gave her an account of all his movements. Being accused of having conspired against the life of Charles IX., and having at least been imprudent enough to talk to la Mole and Coconas about his fooleries, he had persuaded the latter that he could make images of wax, some to soften the hearts of fair ladies, others to make any person he pleased die a lingering death. He got quit with condemnation to the galleys. The queen obtained his liberation to make use of him, and gave him an abbey.

Thirteen years afterwards, he was again charged with attempting to take the life of Henry IV., by magical practices, "having made a waxen figure resembling the king, which he pierced every day, pronouncing certain barbarous words, to make him languish and die.* From this scrape he extricated

* Brantôme, tome viii., 181.

himself by his suppleness, intrigues, and the favour of the ladies. He had even the hardihood to maintain that he was not the same person who had been accused in the time of Charles IX. De Thou, one of his judges, astonished at his villany, calls him "the most impudent and the most abandoned of men." His reputation declined; and for a subsistence he practised fortune-telling, and published a yearly almanac. He survived all Catherine's Italian courtiers, dying in 1615 at the age of fourscore; and, as he had declared publicly and insolently, says Bayle, that he should die an atheist, his body was dragged to the laystall.

Such were the persons who enjoyed the confidence and favour of Catherine. That weak and cruel woman was credulous to excess. It is asserted that the deaths of her husband, herself, and her children, were all foretold to her; but to no purpose. This restlessness, this anxiety to dive into the future, was her torment, and, throughout her whole life, she was the dupe or the accomplice of these impostors. This mania became general: the whole nation was infatuated with it. Nothing was talked of but charms and talismans, hieroglyphics, mysterious medals, constellated rings, enchanted images. But very frequently these extravagances served as a cloak for criminal designs: and all the pretended sorcerers did not get off so easily as Ruggieri. L'Etoile relates that in 1587 an Italian seventy years of age was hanged for magic and sorcery; that he was the head

of a numerous band; and that it was alleged there were thirty thousand of them, “astrologers, sorcerers, and philosophers”—these terms being then synonymous. These wretches corrupted the mind of the multitude, eager after the marvellous, filled it with fears, suspicions, prejudices, superstitions, and gave rise to accusations and too often to crimes.

Bianchi, perfumer to Catherine, was accused by public report of having poisoned the queen of Navarre by means of a pair of scented gloves. However innocent he might be of this charge, supported by no evidence, he showed by his conduct that he was capable of that or any other crime. Hear the testimony of an eye-witness. “Master René, an Italian, was one of the butchers of St. Bartholomew, a man steeped in all sorts of cruelties and atrocities; who went to the prisons to stab the Hugonots, and lived entirely by murder, robbery, and poisoning. The day after the massacre, he enticed to his house his best friend, a rich jeweller, upon pretence of offering him an asylum; and, violating all the sacred rights of nature, friendship, and hospitality, he murdered him with his own hands, and dragged his corpse to the river.”* He died upon a dunghill, his wife in an infamous house, and his two sons on the wheel in 1586.

It were an endless task to reveal all the secrets of the corruption which marked the entry of Catherine

* Journal de Henri III., i. 24, 25.

de Medicis into France, which was the fruit of her policy, or the work of her countrymen. She might boast that for them she had levelled the Alps, as Louis XIV. afterwards did, when he observed, but in a more honourable sense, "There are now no Pyrenees." No wonder that, from the moment of her arrival, throngs of Italians kept following her, in order to make their fortunes. They crossed the mountains in torrents, and inundated the kingdom, like a river overflowing its banks. It was to them a conquered country, and they came to share the spoils. They filled the court, the council-chamber, the Church, and the army; they reined in the finance-department, in which they committed their ravages. They brought with them their tastes, their passions, their prejudices; they changed and corrupted the manners of the nation.

During the reigns of the last three Valois, all the southern provinces of France were filled with Italian bishops and archbishops. A French writer enumerates ten of the former and seven of the latter, with an *et cetera* at the end of each class. They brought the inquisitorial spirit along with them from Italy: they showed themselves the most fiery persecutors of the Protestants, that is to say, of all Frenchmen who did not think as they did. Several of them, not content with spiritual arms, buckled on the cuirass, and resorted to bayonets and cannon for the conversion of those who had gone astray.

In the time of Henry II. and Charles IX., the court

numbered so many as twelve cardinals at once, a circumstance unparalleled since the origin of the monarchy. All these churchmen were the vassals of a foreign prince; the Pope was their immediate sovereign; and they did not consider themselves as subjects of the State. Such too was the opinion of the Popes. Sixtus V. went still further: he insisted that the cardinal de Guise had ceased to be a subject of Henry the Third's at the moment when he received holy orders.

This dignity being the premium reserved for such as served the Popes at the expense of France, those who aspired to it spared no efforts to deserve this foreign decoration; and perhaps this prospect, opened to all ambitious minds, contributed more than any other cause to extinguish every spark of patriotism in too many of the high Catholic clergy.

After the death of Leo X., his successors felt the necessity of checking for their own security the progress of knowledge. Accordingly, they gave new activity in Italy to the Inquisition, and strove to gain admittance for it into all the countries dependent on them. The French cardinals under Francis I. and Henry II. were sensible of the advantage to be derived from such an institution for strengthening their power and the supremacy of the Popes, and united their efforts with those of the Guises, Alba, and Philip II., to introduce the Inquisition into France. They regarded that tribunal as the most efficient remedy for heresy, that is to say, the best adapted to

terrify into submission all who might be tempted to prove refractory to their commands; and they purposed to surround it with dungeons, chains, instruments of torture, faggots, and fires.

The atrocious spirit of persecution which characterises that tribunal had already crossed the mountains. It was in fact the inquisitorial spirit that had kindled the flames which consumed the entire population of Cabrieres and Merindol, in the sacred proscription of whom a monk commissioned by the Pope performed the functions of Inquisitor; it was this that brought the unfortunate and virtuous Anne du Bourg to the scaffold; it was this that burned Vassi, that lighted up fires from one end of France to the other: and for what purpose?—to propagate the opinions and to extend the empire of Rome.

We even find that the title of Inquisitor of the Faith was revived in France in the time of Francis I. During the reign of that prince and his son were to be seen in Paris real auto-da-fés; for what other name can be given to those horrible festivals, at which human victims were sacrificed with due solemnities? In that capital, several Calvinists were burned in this manner in 1547 and 1549. Three ruthless Italian Cordeliers were already invested with the title of Inquisitors in France. The cardinal of Lorraine coveted the office of Grand Inquisitor, of which his inflexibility rendered him truly worthy. In Provence, under the auspices of the vice-legate, a severe Inquisitor spread terror; while, in Languedoc, these

emissaries of Popery revived the fanaticism and horrors of the crusades against the Albigenses.

In 1547, a brief of the Pope to the cardinal of Lorraine and two other cardinals authorised them to exercise the functions of Inquisitors; and, in the following year, a Jacobin Inquisitor of the Faith at Toulouse dedicated to Henry II. a work written to prove that the Bible ought not to be translated into French.

At length, in 1568, a real crusade was published at Toulouse against those of the new religion, by virtue of a bull of Pope Pius V. This is a curious document for the history of fanaticism. The Protestants are there called "Atheists, men living without God, without faith or law. It is Jesus Christ himself," it asserts, "who inspires good Catholics with the idea of assuming the cross, of taking up arms, of fighting like Mattathias and the other Maccabees." It refers to the Albigenses, destroyed in the same country, to the number of sixty thousand heretics; it exhorts the true believers to persecute with the same zeal the new "enemies of God," and to show them no mercy. It assures the crusaders who die in this expedition that "their blood will be to them a second baptism, which will wash away all their sins; and they will go, with the other martyrs, direct to Paradise." The condition for taking the cross in this holy war was to confess, to arm themselves with the body and blood of our Lord; "and if," it is added, "the capitouls [chief magistrates of

Toulouse] will be pleased to lend us some pieces of cannon, things will go on all the better. Concluded at Toulouse, the 21st of September, 1568. All the above is done by authority of our holy Father the Pope." Priests were the captains of the holy "army of the Faith," whose motto was, "*Eamus nos; moriamur cum Christo*—Let us go; let us die with Christ." The Pope, in consequence, remitted the sins of all who armed in "so sacred a cause," and who, alike free from scruple and pity, should have the felicity to slaughter heretics.*

Attacked on all sides, France was on the point of submitting to this odious yoke, and receiving the monster into her bosom, when the noble chancellor l'Hôpital saved her from its fangs. He became of course an object of the hatred and persecution of the court of Rome and of all its partisans. The Pope designed to cite him before his tribunal as suspected of the *crime* of TOLERANCE, and made great efforts and sacrifices to accomplish his purpose, that he might enjoy the soothing satisfaction of seeing one more great man in the dungeons of the Inquisition: and, if he was disappointed, he at least found means to obtain from a depraved court his dismissal and exile.

"L'Hôpital," says an eloquent anonymous French author, in a spirited Eloge on the illustrious chancellor, "long struggled against the cardinal of Lorraine, Me-

* Hist. de Languedoc, fol. v. 216, where this document is given entire.

dicis, Rome, the Council of Spain, and the foreigners, in behalf of the liberty of the nation : he was single-handed against them all, but, zealous for the welfare of the State, he was not to be daunted. He dared to give pacific counsels ; he extinguished the flaming piles ; he proclaimed tolerance and humanity amidst the cries of fanaticism. Charles IX. himself began to listen to his voice. He paid deference and respect to the advice of this great man : that was quite sufficient : Catherine determined upon his disgrace. He was prepared for it. Long before, his friend Olivier had written to him, “ You have the talents that call men to high offices, but the virtues with which they cannot hold them long.” The joy of the wicked honoured his retirement perhaps even more than the regret of the good.

“ A few days after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, some one came to inform him that a party of armed men was approaching Vignay. His vassals and household would have put themselves in a posture of defence. “ No,” said he, “ let it be as it shall please God : if the small door is not wide enough to admit them, let the great one be thrown open.” These men came with the message that the king forgave and took him under his protection. “ I knew not,” replied l’Hôpital, “ that I had ever deserved either death or forgiveness.”

The exile of l’Hôpital was indeed a public calamity, and a triumph for the enemies of France. Popes, cardinals, legates, foreigners, rejoiced at this

victory : but how must the regret of every virtuous mind be embittered by the conviction that, had the chancellor continued two years longer in his high office, History would have been spared the pain of recording the Massacre of St. Bartholomew !

THE END OF VOL. I.

FREDERICK SHOBERL, JUNIOR,
PRINTER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT,
51, RUPERT STREET, HAYMARKET.

